UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CN.10/PV.166
4 May 1992

ENGLISH

DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 21 April 1992, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. ERDOS (Hungary)

- General exchange of views (continued)
- Statement by the Chairman

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages, preferably in the same language as the text to which they refer. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also, if possible, incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent, within one week of the date of this document, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

92-60555 8605-06V (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. SARDENBERG (Brazil): Please accept, Sir, my delegation's warm congratulations on your unanimous election to the chairmanship of the Commission for the 1992 session. Your well-known diplomatic experience and skills give us confidence that our deliberations will be productive and successful. My delegation pledges its full cooperation with you in the important tasks ahead of us.

I wish, through you, Sir, to convey our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau, and I also take this opportunity to express my delegation's gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner, and the Chairmen of last year's Working Groups for the competent way in which they discharged their duties during the 1991 session.

I wish also to add a word of welcome to the new Member States of the United Nations participating in our Commission's work for the first time.

Arguably the last three years have presented us with more epochal events than the previous three decades of recent history. We have been witnessing the emergence of new actors and scenarios on the international stage, at times unfolding dramas that are new and unanticipated, at other times rekindling old and almost forgotten ones.

Against this backdrop we have also witnessed a renewed enhancement of the profile of the United Nations, often playing the role of protagonist in the maintenance of international peace and security. The demise of the antagonism between East and West and the challenges of ensuring peace in a changing international system offer a unique opportunity for the consolidation of the United Nations as a vital mechanism for the promotion of universal security based on the rule of law.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

In this context, it may not matter much whether our Organization is finally working as was envisaged half a century ago or is simply beginning to work as it ought to in the next century. The important point is that all organs and bodies of the Organization should be called into play, as necessary parts that form a solid whole.

As stated before by my delegation, democracy, disarmament and development should constitute the foundations sustaining the new structure of peace. They are interrelated elements of an equation that should be considered concomitantly. More democracy would entail less need for armaments, and therefore more resources would be available for the promotion of development. This equation should be valid for both the domestic and the international domains, and for developing and developed countries alike.

If international relations are conducted in a democratic way and international development is promoted on a fair and equitable basis, there should be an optimal distribution of resources among nations and there would be no ground for have- or have-more countries to fear an imagined threat from have-not or have-less countries. Free flow of goods, peoples and ideas is, in this regard, a requisite for harmonious development, at both the domestic and international levels.

The Disarmament Commission is the specialized, deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues, leading to the adoption of concrete recommendations on those issues. Its main strength resides in the democratic nature of its deliberations, where all Member States of the Organization, large and small, are entitled to present their views on the important issues placed on its agenda. Its recommendations reflect,

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

therefore, a universally consensual perception that gives them an authoritative value in disarmament matters.

The four items currently on the Commission's agenda aptly reflect some of the main concerns of the international community at the present juncture.

The item on "Objective information on military matters" aims at promoting the openness and transparency that should facilitate concrete measures in the field of disarmament, in particular leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, it should serve not only to build confidence among States but also to make the domestic and international public aware of the dangers and wastes of the arms race. This fostering of public consciousness would be an important element in the democratization of international relations, by stimulating wider participation in the process of disarmament.

According to General Assembly resolution 44/119 C, in an annex entitled "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission", deliberations on this item should be concluded at the current session - hopefully with the finalization of a set of guidelines to be consensually adopted by the Commission. My delegation will extend full cooperation to this end. It should be stressed once again that, as a means to facilitate progress in disarmament, the exchange of objective information on military matters cannot be understood as a substitute for earnest endeavours and concrete measures in the field of disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament. In this respect, nuclear-weapon States and States with the largest military arsenals bear a special responsibility for providing such information and making firm commitments to reduce their conventional arsenals and eliminate all weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

The item on "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons" focuses on the most threatening and destabilizing category of armaments and on ways and means to eliminate them at the earliest possible time. The fundamental task before us is to ensure not only that such weapons are not spread, but also that the existing ones are totally eliminated, as an urgent task to preserve life on Earth.

Brazil welcomes the recent initiatives announced by the leaders of the United States and the Russian Federation in reducing some categories of their nuclear arsenals, as well as the French moratorium on nuclear testing, announced earlier this month by Prime Minister Bérégovoy. It is our hope that they will stimulate further reductions in nuclear arsenals as well as the complete cessation of nuclear testing by all nuclear-weapon States.

For its part, Brazil has taken initiatives to consolidate Latin America and the Caribbean as a region free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Following the programme outlined in the Argentine-Brazilian Declaration on Common Nuclear Policy, signed at Foz do Iguaçu on 28 November 1990, our two countries, on 18 July 1991, in Guadalajara, signed the Agreement on the Exclusively Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. By that instrument, both countries undertook not to produce or acquire any nuclear explosive device, established the Common System of Accounting and Control and created the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Material.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

Subsequently, on 13 December 1991, Brazil, Argentina, the Agency for Accounting and Control and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) signed a four-party safeguards agreement. More recently, Brazil, Argentina and Chile have proposed to the parties to the Tlatelolco Treaty some technical amendments in order to put that instrument into force in our countries.

My delegation views with concern the absence of palpable progress in the Disarmament Commission so far on the nuclear item. Because of its global implications, the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons must be thoroughly discussed by the international community at large, since all mankind has a stake in ensuring its own survival.

Recent events have demonstrated that nuclear proliferation will be a permanent possibility so long as nuclear weapons exist. It means the risk not only of future production of new nuclear weapons but also of the unwanted spread of existing weapons to unauthorized hands. The international community should move beyond the current concept of non-proliferation and begin to consider seriously the advisability of adopting a universal and non-discriminatory regime that would forever prohibit the use, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons and ensure the safe destruction of existing ones.

We are ready to work constructively with other delegations in Working Group II in the search for possible areas of consensus which we could build upon in our discussion. Based on the structure of work proposed by the Chairman and agreed to by the Group during the last session, we would be prepared to present contributions, in the hope that they might be of use in advancing our deliberations on this important item.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

The item entitled "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security" focuses on the security concerns of States as perceived in their more immediate geographical milieu. As stated in the title of the item, such concerns have to take into account not only elements specifically related to a given region but also those related to a wider context, which may have a bearing on local perceptions. In other words, regional security, even if it depends a great deal on what happens at the regional level itself, is also a function of what happens at the global level. Local conflicts may be further aggravated by projections of extra-regional rivalries; conversely, their settlement may be facilitated by improvements in the global political atmosphere.

In examining the essential link between regional and global disarmament efforts, we should inquire, on the one hand, under what conditions regional initiatives can help promote efforts at the global level, and, on the other hand, how developments related to global or extra-regional matters can positively or negatively affect efforts undertaken in a regional context.

In this regard, the Joint Declaration on the Complete Prohibition of Chemical and Biological Weapons signed on 5 September 1991 in Mendoza by Brazil, Argentina and Chile, subsequently joined by Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia and Ecuador, is a good example of how regional initiatives could contribute to spurring larger processes at the global level.

In view of diverse historical, cultural, geographical and other factors that affect each region, and even subregions, it would hardly be realistic to imagine that there could be one common general approach to the promotion of regional disarmament. To be effective, each regional effort should be

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

specifically tailored and promoted at the initiative and with the participation of the States of the region concerned, as experiences from other regions, while useful references, may not be automatically transferable to it.

Moreover, it should be borne in mind that efforts to achieve regional disarmament must not lose sight of the overall priorities of disarmament set out by the General Assembly. In this context, it is also relevant to note that the promotion of regional disarmament is most urgent in those regions where there are excessive accumulations of arsenals and high levels of tension, pointing to higher potential risks of conflict.

With those considerations in mind, my delegation will participate constructively in the deliberations of Working Group III, with a view to contributing to the improvement of the documents presented.

The item entitled "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields" seeks to deepen our understanding of the crucial interrelationship of security, development and knowledge. As reflected in the report of Working Group IV on its deliberations at the 1991 session, my delegation, like others, is very much aware of the complexity and sensitivity of the subject, as well as of its timeliness. This Working Group has a wide-ranging and a challenging mandate, encompassing matters that had never before been dealt with in a systematic debate in the United Nations.

Each of the four substantive aspects of the item identified by Working Group IV for consideration involves considerations of a military, economic, scientific and technical nature of the utmost relevance.

Sub-item 1, on scientific and technological developments and their impact on international security, involves complex value judgements on the positive

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

as well as the negative implications that qualitative improvements in the application of science and technology for military purposes may have for international security. In this regard, the view expressed in Working Group IV that the exercise of political judgement is a key factor in determining the impact of the use of science and technology for military purposes deserves to be borne in mind.

Sub-item 2, on science and technology for disarmament, attracted Working Group IV's interest in continuing to work on it by seeking to identify the areas in which science and technology might be applied for verification and related purposes, by identifying which of those areas would be more suitable for international cooperation and, finally, by considering the ways in which this international cooperation might be promoted. My delegation is prepared to engage in a constructive exchange of views on these aspects with a view to exploring ways of making concrete cooperation in this field operational.

In sub-item 3, on the role of science and technology in other related fields, the Working Group had just a brief preliminary debate, since it deemed it advisable to return to the matter after the conclusion of the study commissioned by the General Assembly on charting potential uses of resources allocated to military activities for civilian endeavours to protect the environment. It is my delegation's view that we could usefully engage in a discussion of the conclusions and recommendations of the document in question, as they address issues relevant to the protection of the world environment by means of a constructive use of military resources. On a personal note, I might add that my delegation is greatly interested in this aspect, not only because we are hosting the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, but also because of the circumstance that the Brazilian expert who

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

participated in the preparation of that study, Professor Celso Lafer, is now our Minister of External Relations.

Finally, in sub-item 4, on the transfer of high technology with military applications, Working Group IV expressed interest in continuing to work on this important subject, bearing in mind the proposal for seeking universally acceptable international norms and guidelines that would regulate such transfers. Taking note of this interest, the General Assembly recognized in resolution 46/38 D, that norms or guidelines for the transfer of high technology with military applications should take into account legitimate requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, while ensuring that they did not deny access to high-technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes. The resolution called upon our Commission to continue its consideration, within the scope of its agenda, of all relevant aspects of the question at its present session, with a view to concluding its work on this matter at its next session. It also invited Member States to make available to the Secretary-General pertinent information and comments on this subject. In response to this invitation, Brazil has sent appropriate information and comments to the Secretariat. Copies of the document will be made available to interested delegations.

(Mr. Sardenberg, Brazil)

My delegation hopes that the contents of this document will assist our deliberations during the current session by bringing further clarification to the thrust of working document A/CN.10/145, presented last year by Argentina and Brazil. These two documents, together with others that may be presented by other delegations, may help focus the discussions during the 1992 session with a view to ensuring more concrete and operational work.

In my delegation's view, if we succeed in adopting at the 1993 session a substantive document concerning universally acceptable international norms or guidelines to regulate the international transfer of high technology with military applications, the Disarmament Commission will have accomplished a crucial contribution to fostering international peace and security, while stimulating the unimpeded flow of technological products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes. Such an accomplishment would be emblematic of the fundamental interrelationship of democracy, disarmament and development that should constitute the foundation of the new structure of peace.

Mr. LUNA (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to preside over the work of the Disarmament Commission at its present session. I am certain that your diplomatic experience will contribute to our making significant progress in the four subject areas we shall be considering in the forthcoming weeks.

I should also like to express our gratitude to the Secretariat for its invaluable support in our work.

At this session of the Commission my country will have the honour to chair Working Group III on the subject, "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security".

(Mr. Luna, Peru)

Peru's position on this subject is well known. We feel that regional disarmament is one of the essential elements of disarmament efforts in the world. In this regard, the two levels of action - regional and global - are complementary and should be pursued more or less simultaneously.

The Latin American region has accumulated much experience in this area. Since the Tlatelolco Treaty, which established the first inhabited nuclear-free zone on Earth, the Latin American and Caribbean countries have striven to adopt various types of initiatives, making this region one of the most active in efforts aimed at regional disarmament.

In order to contribute even more to this process, in December 1991, at Peru's initiative, the five Heads of State of the countries members of the Andean Group signed the Cartagena Declaration on the renunciation of weapons of mass destruction, in an international situation in which actions of this nature are becoming increasingly urgent. This Declaration has already been supported by a significant number of other Latin American countries. It has also been considered by the European Community as an important and positive step in the elimination of such weapons.

However, my country feels that the regional approach to disarmament should take into account the following elements in order to enjoy the broadest possible application.

In the first place, any regional disarmament effort should take into account the conditions and specific characteristics of the region, without this constituting an obstacle to the ongoing endeavour.

Secondly, it follows from the foregoing that the diversity of existing situations and, hence, the variety of regional agreements that can be carried out in practice must be recognized. Similarly, the various levels of progress

(Mr. Luna, Peru)

in each region with respect to its own disarmament processes must also be recognized - from the adoption of confidence-building measures fostering security to arriving at effective agreements involving all aspects of disarmament and arms limitation.

Thirdly, since it is necessary to take into account the specificity of each regional situation, disarmament experience in a given region is not automatically transferable to another. In this context, it is vital that the countries outside a given region respect its disarmament agreements and initiatives.

In sum, given those premises, it is necessary to work out as broad as possible a set of recommendations so that they can be used by all regions interested in or committed to disarmament processes. That is to say, each region will select from the set of recommendations to be adopted by the Commission those which can be most effectively adapted to its own needs.

Therefore, the establishment of principles and guidelines to orient these processes is extremely important, and my country, as Chairman of Working Group III, is determined to work towards arriving at basic agreements on such principles at this session.

Another item to be considered by the Commission in the coming weeks is that of "Objective information on military matters". Inasmuch as this is the last year for us to formulate and adopt recommendations on this item, my delegation feels that the paper presented by the Chairman of Working Group I to the previous session of the Commission can serve as an excellent basis for the deliberations we are to carry out at this session.

Although objective information on military matters cannot be considered a disarmament measure in and of itself, it contributes substantially to the

(Mr. Luna, Peru)

formulation of confidence-building measures, which are often the first step leading to negotiating processes on disarmament or arms limitation at the global, regional or subregional levels. Hence, this subject is closely linked to regional disarmament.

The establishment of a Register of Conventional Arms at this session of the General Assembly, the development of which is being carried out at the appropriate levels, should, however, be given political impetus in order to enhance the process, including all possible measures to increase openness and transparency in the presentation or exchange of information on military matters.

As far as Peru is concerned, my Government will shortly present its report on military expenditures as appropriate in the context of the information system approved by the General Assembly, to which we attach a central role in processes of this type.

Despite the significant progress made in the bilateral negotiations between the two nuclear super-Powers, as well as their recent unilateral commitments, the item on nuclear disarmament still constitutes one of the main concerns of the international community.

The dispersion of nuclear arms in States that have been placed under the control of various national entities raises the problem of their proliferation and control. It is necessary, therefore, to reconsider the terms and scope of negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the framework of a profoundly changed international system in which the threat of nuclear war has significantly decreased but has not totally disappeared.

Another of the constant concerns of my country is the cessation of nuclear tests in all environments in order to halt the qualitative development

(Mr. Luna, Peru)

of nuclear weapons and the production of new types of such weapons. In this connection, we welcome the France's recent announcement of a moratorium on nuclear tests in 1992; this could be a significant step towards achieving the cessation of all nuclear tests.

Finally, we feel that the item on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields is of basic importance with respect to the vertical proliferation of all types of arms, in particular nuclear weapons, and the transfer of high technology from the developed to the developing countries.

My delegation believes that the excellent work done by Working Group IV at the previous session of the Commission has provided a solid basis for continuing our deliberations on this item.

Some of the aspects which were highlighted at the previous session and which my delegation feels deserve special consideration in the coming weeks are the following: first, channelling scientific and technological resources currently devoted to military purposes towards promoting economic and social development; and, secondly, the establishment of international norms and guidelines to regulate the transfer of critical technology, in particular dual-use technology.

(Mr. Luna, Peru)

On this last point, my delegation would like to say that the norms and guidelines which will eventually be established should not become an obstacle to access by developing countries to high technology products and services and specialized know-how in this area for peaceful purposes.

My delegation is ready and willing to make the greatest possible effort in order successfully to conclude our work. As the Chairman pointed out yesterday, it is necessary to promote basic changes in attitudes, ideas and negotiating methods by individuals, delegations and Governments represented here in order for us to meet the challenges of this period of accelerated historic change. Such a development would promote a better understanding of the need for a greater sense of pragmatism that manifests itself in concrete action and thus strengthens and gives meaning to multilateral disarmament efforts.

Mr. ORDONEZ (Philippines): On behalf of the Philippine delegation, may I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. We believe that your expertise and diplomacy in disarmament matters, as well as your able chairmanship of one of the Commission's working groups last year, will help guide us in our work at this session. Our felicitations go also to the other members of the Bureau.

In the brief period since the General Assembly adjourned last December, much has transpired that gives added impetus to our search for a durable international security system. A new era has dawned upon the lands that once made up the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. A looming entente now hovers above the two Koreas. The Security Council, in a summit declaration last January, has more clearly defined its role and reaffirmed its resolve to fulfil its obligations in relation to arms control and disarmament. Its

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

resolutions are being complied with in parts of the Middle East. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has more firmly committed itself to the search for an appropriate regional security arrangement. These and other developments constitute a widening window of opportunity for our deliberations.

The polarized positions that defied reconciliation during the cold war are undergoing important shifts. We hear less talk of a balance of terror, or of the doctrine of mutually assured destruction, or even deterrence as the linchpin of super-Power defence.

We used to be in a great quandary trying to reconcile one bloc's insistence on disarmament without controls and another bloc's proposal for controls without disarmament. Now more than ever it seems possible to bridge the gap between these two poles.

Some key nuclear players have themselves initiated moves that nudge us closer towards our once elusive goals. My delegation, therefore, looks forward to a more fruitful session of the Commission this time around and hereby offers the following observations on the items before us.

Concerning objective information on military matters, the establishment this year of a universal and non-discriminatory arms Register may well be the first major United Nations disarmament effort in the post-cold war era. My delegation supported the resolution establishing that Register. It is our hope that it will advance the objective of institutionalizing a regime of transparency in the traffic of conventional arms, eventually to include their production and stockpiling.

Just before this resolution was adopted, the five Permanent Members of the Security Council agreed upon a non-binding conventional arms trade

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

protocol along the same lines, which also urged serious efforts at self-restraint on arms sales and transfers. We would now hope that the Conference on Disarmament will take its cue from these twin initiatives and bring the matter forward in its negotiating agenda.

Likewise, it should now be possible to pursue the proposal for a regime within the United Nations to promote openness and transparency in military matters. Such a regime may consider as its initial elements the standardized reporting system on military expenditures, the Conventional Arms Register, and the system for collecting and distributing reports within the context of the biological weapons Convention. This may be expanded later to include measures already under consideration by the Conference on Disarmament and others already in operation under existing multilateral frameworks. Apropos of this, the information system of the Office of Disarmament Affairs ought to be strengthened in order further to enhance the role of the United Nations in the area of verification, which necessitates a comprehensive database.

Concerning the process of nuclear disarmament, we welcome the consensus decision of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly to create in 1995 a preparatory committee for the Review Conference of States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which will deliberate on the question of its extension. As a State party to the NPT, the Philippines would welcome creative and novel approaches towards ensuring the extension of the Treaty beyond 1995. In this context, some ideas advanced very recently by one major nuclear State deserve attention, namely, (a) placing nuclear weapons on "zero-alert status"; (b) keeping nuclear warheads separate from their delivery vehicles; and (c) taking a new look at

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

the idea of placing nuclear weapons control under an international organization, such as the United Nations.

Earlier this month, France announced that it was suspending until the end of this year its nuclear testing programme in the South Pacific. For its part, Russia has reaffirmed the former Soviet Union's moratorium on nuclear testing for one year. And China has finally acceded to the NPT. My delegation most heartily welcomes these moves. Albeit conditional and short-term in intent, these unilateral initiatives are not only encouraging, but also provide us greater latitude in forging consensus.

We ought to capitalize on these tentative moves so that they may lead to more lasting arrangements, until we can adopt a comprehensive test ban treaty, a treaty that finally includes the prohibition of underground testing, and thus puts an end to the nuclear arms race once and for all.

It ought not to be necessary for either France or Russia to end their self-imposed moratorium and resume testing. Just as the concept of deterrence has been renounced in the multilateral efforts in Geneva completely to ban chemical weapons, so should it be possible now to renounce it as regards nuclear weapons.

Concerning the regional approach to disarmament, our region, Asia and the Pacific, comprises a vast expanse of land and maritime area, and a huge population. It consists of countries of widely differing sizes, cultural traditions and political and economic systems. Security concerns also differ widely, with various shades of subregional threats and strengths, notably those of South Asia and North-East Asia, where the issues of nuclear proliferation remain unresolved.

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

None the less, we in South-East Asia can point to some positive developments. The orderly entry of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and the implementation of the peace agreement that is now in progress there represents a historic and unprecedented development. The success of UNTAC under the command of this Organization's own Mr. Yashushi Akashi, a veteran diplomat and an Asian, would end the longest standing conflict in South-East Asia. To him and to his team, we extend our very best wishes.

Of no small interest to us is the indication of the countries of Indochina to accede to the South-East Asia Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. Their accession will boost ASEAN's efforts at maintaining regional stability, which only recently was outlined during the fourth ASEAN summit meeting and embodied in the 1992 Singapore Declaration. Both these developments can be ascribed to the expanded and intensified series of dialogues on security cooperation within and beyond ASEAN, a series of dialogues in which the Philippines played a key role.

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

Also worth noting is our Government's recent decision to terminate the 1947 Philippines-United States military bases agreement, an event that has moved us in ASEAN further to intensify consultations on an appropriate security arrangement for our region. As President Corazon C. Aquino stated in her address during the recently held fourth ASEAN summit,

> "We view this process of consultations on the requirement of regional security, among ourselves and with our friends in the region, as an important confidence-building measure for lasting peace and stability in our part of the world".

The Philippines hopes that through this consultation process - in line with ASEAN's desire for a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality and for a South-East Asian weapon-free zone - present and potential sources of conflict will be clarified and resolved, be they boundary questions, issues pertaining to the exploitation of natural resources in border areas or irritants occasioned by the movements of peoples and goods.

It can be said that the diminished levels of super-Power conflict have allowed us to breathe a little easier and to focus a little more on concerns closer to home. Daunting challenges remain, nevertheless. Regional initiatives in disarmament and security cannot be divorced from global considerations. The one must complement the other, and each must be mutually supportive. As our Foreign Secretary, Mr. Raul S. Manglapus, said in his keynote address at the Kyoto Disarmament Conference last May:

> "There is a will to disarm among the peoples of the world, but in the councils of government the need to arm is still of superior persuasion".

How shall we reconcile the will to disarm with the need to arm? If we are to develop the necessary confidence to forswear armaments and the military

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

as essential to our survival, we must formulate and install the mechanisms essential to the institutionalization of trust, stability and predictability in all security relations. In this regard, we commend the active role played by the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in providing a forum for dialogue in various regions. Their pioneering role in raising security- and disarmament-consciousness in Asia and the Pacific has had a positive effect, and is a welcome contribution to confidence-building.

Concerning science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament, it is important to consider how we can arrive at a better-balanced set of guidelines, one that addresses the concerns both of supplier and of receiver countries. While existing regimes aimed at curbing exports of technology and materials for weapons of mass destruction help promote non-proliferation, they are viewed by many developing countries as discriminatory, denying them access to legitimate information and equipment for development purposes. Advances in technological developments, after all, have dual uses.

My delegation urges greater multilateralism in the resolution of these issues, including such questions as the "brain drain", a problem that seems to have arisen as a result of the disenfranchisement of hundreds of scientists and experts in the former Soviet Union. Efforts to address the problem were affirmed by the final declaration of the Security Council summit last January. There is need, however, to step up cooperation on the conversion of military industries, facilities and know-how to civilian use to address this problem at its source. As with most problems in disarmament and arms control, what is required as a first step in matters relating to science and technology is openness and transparency between suppliers and recipients.

(Mr. Ordonez, Philippines)

It augurs well for our work that the substantive advances of the First Committee's past session have been matched by improvements in the administrative area.

When we adjourned last December, my delegation noted that fully 60 per cent of First Committee resolutions had been adopted without a vote, compared with only 50 per cent the year before. The number of resolutions and decisions was down to 45, compared with 60 the previous year, an efficiency improvement of 25 per cent. There were fewer drafts during the session, and there was an increased incidence of a meeting of minds, as indicated by the higher percentage of consensus adoptions. We hope that the same spirit of consensus-building will prevail in this year's session of the Commission, the second year we are implementing the reform package streamlining the agenda.

As the new year dawned, it was possible to believe that the many autumns and winters of our discontent would finally yield to the promise of spring. Well, here we are in springtime: let us seize the moment and pursue the opportunities at hand. Let us finally install the structures necessary to ensure for the world, particularly the developing world, a summer of undiminished optimism throughout the landscape of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. To borrow an expression from our Chairman from Hungary, one echoed by our Vice-Chairman from Finland, "fossilized views" have no room in our quest for peace through disarmament.

Mr. MARKER (Pakistan): I should like, at the outset, Mr. Chairman, to express the happiness of my delegation to see you, the representative of a country with which Pakistan maintains very cordial relations, presiding over the Disarmament Commission. We are confident that, with your vast experience and able guidance, the work of the Commission will be conducted in a most skillful and efficient manner.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

My delegation congratulates the other members of the Bureau, and extends a warm welcome to the new Member States which are participating in the work of this Commission for the first time. I should like to assure to you, and all our colleagues in the Commission, of the fullest cooperation and support of my delegation.

I should also like to pay a tribute to Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner for the excellent manner in which he guided the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission last year.

I should also like to avail myself of this opportunity to welcome in our midst the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky. He is an old friend and colleague with whom I have been privileged to work over a number of years, and nothing gives my delegation greater pleasure, or evokes more confidence, than to know that Under-Secretary-General Petrovsky will be devoting his considerable skills and talents to the vital issue of disarmament.

At a time when dramatic changes have swept the world, this year's session of the Disarmament Commission has assumed even greater importance and significance. The transformation in East-West relations, characterized by cooperation and understanding, has presented us with challenges and valuable opportunities in strengthening international and regional peace and stability and in pursuing disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and confidence-building. Pakistan continues to remain unwavering in its commitment to promoting the cause of international peace and security and the elimination of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

Over the years, we have expressed deep concern about the threat posed to non-nuclear-weapon States by the nuclear arsenals of nuclear-weapon States. Obviously, the most effective assurance against the use or threat of use of

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

nuclear weapons would be their complete elimination. However, until the realization of this objective, the non-nuclear-weapon States must be provided with legally binding assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in order to address their security concerns.

There is a growing recognition in the world today that many security problems and preoccupations of States can be accorded fuller consideration in the regional context, where remedial measures which are suitable to specific regional conditions can be designed. The success of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in Europe, which resulted in the conventional-force reduction Agreement, bear testimony to the idea that regional consultations offer the most relevant and efficacious assurances for many of the problems of security and arms control. We hope that the new momentum towards greater confidence, security and cooperation in Europe will also give a boost to regional efforts in other parts of the world.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

The tragic conflict in the Gulf has added a special sense of urgency to the objectives of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, disarmament and confidence building in various regions of the world. It is in this context that the arms control and disarmament proposals made recently, including the ones by the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the President of Egypt, hold special importance for the South Asia and Middle East regions. We are also encouraged by the progress achieved in Latin America in this regard.

The reduction in tension and the disarmament which have so far been achieved at the global level, modest though they may be, must now be supplemented by similar measures at the regional level. It is axiomatic that global and regional approaches to disarmament complement each other, are not mutually exclusive, and should be pursued simultaneously in order to promote regional peace and security.

The problem of security of smaller States comprises an all-important dimension of the global security environment. For a large number of States, perceived threats to their security and the need for acquiring an adequate measure of defence capability are primarily linked with conditions obtaining in their own respective regions. Many problems that impede progress in disarmament are therefore of a regional nature.

Since the importance of a regional approach to disarmament derives from this overriding consideration, collective endeavours by countries at the regional level to promote disarmament and enhance security at the lowest level of armaments are an indispensable prerequisite to their advocacy of global disarmament. A regional approach thus offers the most realistic prospect for meaningful progress towards disarmament as threat perceptions and security concerns vary from region to region. This approach is steadily gaining ground, as evidenced by the adoption of resolution 46/36 I on regional

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

disarmament submitted by Pakistan to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. Pakistan also submitted a working paper on "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security" at last year's session of the Disarmament Commission.

At the global level, Pakistan has attached the utmost importance to the early conclusion of a nuclear-test ban with the ultimate objective of preventing nuclear proliferation and removing nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth. At the regional level, we have welcomed such initiatives as the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones to keep various regions free of nuclear weapons.

The accord between Argentina and Brazil on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the recent agreement between North and South Korea on a nuclear-free Korean peninsula are cases in point vindicating the regional concept of disarmament and security. This new momentum towards greater confidence, security and cooperation could provide the impetus for similar efforts being undertaken in other parts of the world.

We remain firmly committed at the highest level to the objective of nuclear non-proliferation and are willing to accept any non-discriminatory regional regime for keeping South Asia free of nuclear weapons. In this connection, and in consonance with the renewed attention that is currently being focused on the dangers of nuclear proliferation, my delegation wishes to highlight some of the proposals made by Pakistan over the past two decades. These include the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, a proposal which has been repeatedly endorsed by the General Assembly since 1974, and the issuance of a joint declaration by India and Pakistan renouncing the acquisition or manufacture of nuclear weapons. In 1979, we proposed an agreement with India on a system of bilateral inspection of all nuclear

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

facilities on a reciprocal basis. In 1979 again, we proposed simultaneous acceptance of International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards by India and Pakistan on all nuclear facilities. The same year we also expressed our readiness to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty simultaneously with India. In 1987, we proposed the conclusion of a bilateral or regional nuclear-test-ban treaty. The same year, we also proposed the convening of an international conference on nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of regional and other States. Unfortunately, the Indian response to each of these proposals has been negative.

On 6 June 1991, the Prime Minister of Pakistan put forward three important proposals for arms control and nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia. These proposals call for, first, consultations by the United States, Russia and China with India and Pakistan to ensure nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia; secondly, bilateral arrangements or a regional regime for the prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction in South Asia; and thirdly, a mutual and balanced reduction of forces in South Asia consistent with the principle of equal and undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments.

We are encouraged by the positive response of many countries to these proposals. We hope that India will also respond positively, particularly to the proposal for five-nation consultations for a nuclear non-proliferation regime in South Asia. Nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia is a vital condition for regional peace, security and progress. The proposals made by our Prime Minister are in keeping with the spirit of the times and reflect our genuine desire that the South Asian countries should concentrate their efforts

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

on economic development through the diversion of resources currently allocated to defence.

Pakistan fully supports the concept of transparency in armaments as long as it simultaneously and comprehensively takes into account all its related and integrally linked aspects and helps in enhancing confidence building between States, particularly at the regional level, with the ultimate objective of ensuring the equal and undiminished security of States at the lowest level of armaments. The accumulation of armaments in various regions of the world is the result of a number of factors: unresolved territorial disputes, denial of the right of self-determination, ambitions for regional hegemony by States possessing military superiority, and foreign occupation and military intervention.

One of the most important issues to be addressed by the international community is therefore the peaceful resolution of outstanding conflicts and disputes. Only thus would proposals for transparency in armaments succeed in their essential objective and the process of regional and international peace and security be strengthened. Pakistan has consistently held the view that the question of transparency in armaments, and specifically of conventional arms transfers, should be considered within the overall context of arms control in all its other inseparable and integrally linked aspects, particularly the indigenous production capabilities of different countries, as well as the legitimate security concerns of States. These aspects must be taken into account simultaneously and in an integrated manner.

It is the view of my delegation that arms control measures which are partial, or which address only selected aspects of a multifaceted issue, or which are discriminatory in nature or unbalanced in the treatment of different elements cannot be implemented successfully. This is particularly true of

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

measures that focus on transparency in international arms transfers while relegating to a different plane equally important issues such as the indigenous armaments production capabilities of States, existing stockpiles of weapons, or the transfer of armaments technology.

Pakistan has always supported, in principle, the ultimate objective of the proposal regarding objective information on military matters. In our view, however, the collection of information on military matters concerning all States could create potential problems for smaller and militarily weaker States. The availability of information on military matters through an international reporting system can work against the security interests of smaller States. While these States may not essentially benefit from the information they receive regarding the military capability of bigger States, information concerning themselves as smaller and weaker States could be used to their disadvantage by bigger States seeking regional or global hegemony and influence.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

The Disarmament Commission has examined the question of military budgets since 1979. Efforts have been made over the past years to evolve a set of principles which would govern the actions by States to freeze and reduce military budgets.

In our view, the adoption of arbitrary criteria to freeze or cut military spending, without addressing the security concerns of States is not realistic. The recommendations evolved by the Disarmament Commission must, in particular, give due consideration to the security concerns of small, developing and non-aligned States and their regional security perspectives.

The wide disparity between the armaments expenditure of militarily strong States and the other States cannot be justified either. The reduction in military budgets, therefore, should be initiated by those States which possess the largest military arsenals.

Finally, it would be more feasible and equitable to link the reduction of military expenditure to force reductions which provide for cuts in the number of men and machines. A similar approach was outlined in the Final Document (S-10/2) of the tenth special session in paragraphs 89 and 90. There is a great need to initiate ways and means to implement that decision.

Science and technology is the common asset of mankind and should be commonly shared. There should be a free flow of ideas and information concerning science and technology, the equitable distribution of which constitutes an essential element of international peace and security.

The developing countries are confronted with increasing resistance in their efforts to obtain technology for the development and advance of their peaceful nuclear energy programmes. The General Assembly, through paragraph 1 (b) of its resolution 32/50, has categorically affirmed that

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

"All States have the right, in accordance with the principles of sovereign equality, to develop their programme for the peaceful use of nuclear technology for economic and social development, in conformity with their priorities, interests and needs".

The resolution also clearly states, in paragraph 1 (c), that

"All States, without discrimination, should have access to and should be free to acquire technology, equipment and materials for the peaceful use of nuclear energy".

Pakistan believes that all States Members of the United Nations should abide by these principles, in order to check and reverse the negative trends impeding cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear energy.

Naval disarmament needs to be addressed urgently, owing to the rapid increase of naval power of some States. The acquisition of aircraft carriers and nuclear-powered submarines by some regional States is a cause of grave concern to their smaller neighbours.

The relationship between disarmament and development has been clearly established and recognized by the United Nations. The recommendations adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development have, unfortunately, not been implemented. It is a sad reflection on mankind that more money is spent on armaments each year, while the developing countries continue to struggle with their international debt problems.

The relaxation of tensions, the universal movement towards democracy and the serious quest for arms control have indeed created a propitious environment for strengthening international and regional peace and stability, as well as pursuing disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and confidence-building. We must avail ourselves of the rare and opportune moment

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

which now exists for establishing a fair, non-discriminatory and multilateral approach to disarmament, in a common endeavour to promote regional and international peace and security.

Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand): I begin by congratulating you, Sir, and the Bureau on your election. Your experience, Sir, in other key parts of the United Nations system is a good omen for us at this time.

Like the representatives of Brazil, the Philippines, Pakistan and others who have spoken before me, my delegation is struck by the fact that the most challenging feature of the times in which we live is the constantly changing global scene that forms the backdrop to the Commission's annual deliberations. The more positive climate for achieving progress on disarmament issues has, of course, been widely acknowledged during our last two sessions. But over the past year this positive trend has, if anything, accelerated. The conclusive end of the cold war, the continuing common cause that Member States have brought to bear in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the consolidation of democratic forces in the former Soviet Union and elsewhere - all have been among the catalysts for the breathtaking unilateral disarmament initiatives announced by the United States and Russia in recent months. In recent weeks the announcement by France of its suspension of nuclear testing in the South Pacific, which is New Zealand's corner of the world, is further proof that there are indeed different currents now flowing.

So within the Commission's four Working Groups there are now some unparalleled opportunities for progress. A constructive approach to the issues on our agenda and a pragmatic focus on developing practical consensus are the key requirements. New Zealand does not think we should waste efforts or time dwelling on issues where it is readily apparent that no consensus

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

is achievable. With that in mind, I should like to turn briefly to the work of Working Group I. Let me express New Zealand's appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for your efforts last year in preparing a text on objective information on military matters that draws together points made in the discussion. The text will, in our view, provide an excellent basis for this year's final deliberations on the item.

In the aftermath of the Gulf War the contribution that greater openness and transparency on military matters can make to building confidence and enhancing security has been more widely acknowledged. But current events in Central Europe, where stability remains distressingly elusive, lend further force to the calls for more effective monitoring of arms transfers.

New Zealand is gratified by a number of positive developments in recent months in the area of openness and transparency. The report of the Secretary-General's expert group on ways and means of increasing transparency of conventional arms transfers was welcomed by two resolutions at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, both of which my delegation sponsored. The resolution establishing a universal, non-discriminatory Register of Conventional Arms, encompassing information from Member States on arms transfers, holdings, procurement and other relevant policies represents an important landmark. New Zealand is committed to contributing information to the Register and looks forward to its further development.

In parallel with the contribution that States make to the United Nations conventional arms Register, New Zealand urges all States to participate in the Secretary-General's standardized reporting system on military expenditures. We hope that the consensus resolution adopted last year signals a greater commitment by all Member States to do so. We look forward to reviewing the progress in this regard at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

In the field of nuclear disarmament, the progress made in the last year has exceeded earlier expectations. The respective proposals by Presidents Gorbachev and Bush last year concerning the destruction of short-range nuclear weapons and the withdrawal of tactical sea-based nuclear weapons represent, among other achievements, the most dramatic and far-reaching disarmament initiatives since the very inception of the nuclear arms race. The significant nuclear reductions to which the United States and Russia have unilaterally committed themselves represent a major contribution to the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and should help to facilitate the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995.

This is a key priority for New Zealand. We have been encouraged by the significant number of new accessions to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the course of the last year. All five permanent members of the Security Council are either parties to the Treaty or, in the case of France, have announced their intention to accede to it. As a result, the Treaty is now close to achieving universal adherence. Given the central place the Treaty occupies within the international disarmament and security framework, New Zealand would strongly urge all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty without delay. The important contribution that the newly independent States of the Commonwealth of Independent States can make in acceding to the Non-Proliferation Treaty at an early stage deserves particular emphasis in this connection.

New Zealand has long held the view that a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty would make an essential contribution to efforts to halt both the vertical and the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. In this context, New Zealand warmly welcomes in particular the decision recently taken

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

by France to suspend its nuclear testing programme in the South Pacific. We also strongly endorse the call made by President Mitterrand for other nuclear-weapon States to follow the lead provided by France and Russia in stopping nuclear testing. Against this background, the Conference on Disarmament will, we trust, soon be able to concentrate greater attention on issues of nuclear testing.

A number of other important steps have recently been taken which should serve to build confidence in the nuclear field. Two particular examples deserve brief mention: First, as the Brazilian Ambassador noted, the signature of a safeguards agreement between Argentina, Brazil and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) last December - which means these two countries' nuclear facilities will be opened to international inspection - is a noteworthy and commendable initiative. Secondly, the ratification by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 9 April of a safeguards agreement with IAEA is also a welcome development. In accordance with that agreement it is incumbent on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to allow inspections of all its nuclear facilities within 90 days. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to ensure that effective and comprehensive inspections pursuant to both the IAEA agreement and the inter-Korean accord take place without delay.

Although discussions are at an early stage, we also hope that proposals for a dialogue on nuclear issues in the South Asian context will prove fruitful.

The many constructive developments in the nuclear-disarmament field provide a positive context, therefore, for the deliberations of Working Group II of our Commission. But the work that the United Nations Special

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

Commission has been obliged to carry out in Iraq provides a sobering reminder that there can be no complacency about nuclear and other forms of proliferation. New Zealand, which is contributing to the Special Commission, fully supports the activities that are being undertaken to ensure that Iraq cannot in future pursue a nuclear-weapons programme.

But, at the same time, we recognize that prevention is better than cure. It is imperative that the current IAEA safeguards regime be strengthened. No State which seeks to pursue a clandestine nuclear-weapons programme should be left in any doubt that such wrongdoing will remain undetected.

The gathering strength of nuclear and other disarmament will beget new challenges. Clearly, the environmentally safe destruction of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction must constitute an essential component of the disarmament process. This point has added force in view of the imminent Earth Summit at Rio.

There are real prospects, therefore, for further progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. Our objective within Working Group II should be to complement recent developments by advancing discussion of nuclear disarmament issues along constructive lines, with a view to reaching consensus recommendations. I think it was clear to most of the delegations that participated in last year's deliberations that we are less likely to arrive at consensus recommendations on nuclear issues when discussions remain focused at a general level. Indeed, the experience last year tended to reinforce the differences of view between various delegations when this occurred, rather than contributing to the identification of common ground.

Accordingly, this led to suggestions that an attempt should be made to focus deliberations on specific nuclear disarmament issues to provide a more

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

fruitful basis for consensus recommendations. Although no agreement was reached on these suggestions last year, New Zealand supports further consideration being given to this approach at our current session. We appreciate in particular the consultations that Ambassador Shah of India is carrying out in this regard.

At this time, when we are bearing witness to far-reaching measures of nuclear disarmament, it would neither reflect well on the stature of the Disarmament Commission nor be in keeping with the positive climate in which we live if the Commission itself proved incapable of discussing nuclear disarmament issues in a constructive and purposeful way. We hope that Working Group III, which deals with the regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security, will therefore also make substantive progress.

The need for the international community to accord priority to regional disarmament and security measures and arrangements is underlined by the persistence of disputes and conflicts, some long-standing, in various regions of the world. The end of the cold war and the consequential improved global climate cannot of itself provide answers to such problems. Indeed, in some instances it has exacerbated them.

As a result, New Zealand believes that States, individually and in the context of relevant regional arrangements, must match their commitment to global security and disarmament measures with a similar commitment at a regional level. Earlier speakers have made similar references. We think that nuclear-weapon-free zones, such as those established by the Treaties of Rarotonga and Tlatelolco, can play a useful role in reinforcing and complementing global non-proliferation measures. There now appear to be new

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

possibilities for developing the concept of such zones in areas that have been in the past the subject of concerns about proliferation.

Equally, in the areas of the world where the accumulation of conventional armaments has reached a destabilization level, consideration should be given to the negotiation of agreements limiting conventional arms. While the example that the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) provides in the European context may not be directly applicable to the problems faced in other regions, aspects of the CFE experience are relevant.

The paper on regional disarmament prepared by Ambassador Wisnumurti of Indonesia at last year's session provides an excellent framework for our deliberations at both this session and next year's session. New Zealand will put forward more detailed views on this issue within the Working Group.

The fourth item on our agenda, "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields", was the subject of a constructive exchange of views at the 1991 session. A number of proposals were put forward that will need to be explored in greater detail at this session. Given the adoption by consensus by the General Assembly of the relevant resolution, we believe that the Working Group should focus particular attention on the question of the development of norms or guidelines for the transfer of high technology with military applications. This is clearly an issue of growing importance to the international community, and one in which due weight must be given to the legitimate developmental and security concerns of States.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

The four substantive items on our agenda span a broad range of disarmament issues. But the motivation underlying each is the same: the desire by the international community to address destabilizing accumulations of weapons of all kinds in order to enhance international peace and security. This is the common cause that should unite us all, including those 16 new countries which we welcome and which sit among us this year on the Disarmament Commission.

It is nearly 50 years since the original drafters of the Charter expressed the determination "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". As was recognized at the summit meeting of the Security Council on 31 January this year, it will be recalled, the current climate clearly holds out greater promise that the United Nations can play a more effective role in this regard. This year, within the Commission, under your able guidance, Sir, we have an important opportunity to contribute to this end.

Mr. KRASULIN (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): May I begin by sincerely congratulating you, Sir, upon your election as Chairman of this session of the Disarmament Commission. I am particularly pleased because you represent a friendly neighbouring country. I wish to assure you that in your efforts in this important post you can rely on the full support of the Russian delegation.

I should also like to welcome here the delegations of those countries that are participating in the deliberations of the Commission for the first time. I am referring, above all, to the representatives of the republics of the former Soviet Union that have now become full-fledged members of the world community. We stand ready fully to cooperate and interact with the delegations of those countries as we discuss the items on the agenda of our forum.

(Mr. Krasulin, Russian Federation)

Finally, I should like to congratulate my long-time very good friend, Mr. Davinic who was appointed to a very new and very important post, that of Director of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. We all know Mr. Davinic as a high-class professional person, one who is simply a delight to work with. I should like to wish the new Director of the Office for Disarmament Affairs every success and express the hope that we shall cooperate further in the future.

This is the first time that the delegation of the Russian Federation has taken its seat in the Commission. But we did not come here empty-handed. We have brought with us an impressive portfolio of positions and proposals on virtually all major issues of arms control and disarmament. The main outlines of this package were reflected in President Boris Yeltsin's remarks at the special meeting of the Security Council on 31 January and in his letter to the Secretary-General dated 27 January 1992 concerning Russia's policy in the area of arms limitation and reduction.

One of the top priorities for Russia as a nation aspiring to regain freedom and democracy is to identify its place in the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security, in particular in the light of Russia's special responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council.

Together with other members of the international community Russia is willing to make its tangible contribution to the formation of a single global space for cooperation and security. This will be our long-term goal as we formulate and pursue our policies in the field of arms limitation and reduction.

(Mr. Krasulin, Russian Federation)

Disarmament has traditionally been Russia's priority. This tradition goes back to the Hague Conferences held at the turn of the century on Russia's initiative. Today we also view disarmament as one of the crucial instruments for ensuring national security and promoting international peace and stability.

As successor to the former Soviet Union, Russia confirms all its obligations under existing bilateral and multilateral treaties and agreements that have been signed in the field of arms control and disarmament and will strictly comply with them.

In the military-political and military-strategic areas Russia will firmly pursue the following long-term goals:

Russia will structure its armed forces in such a way that they could not be used for purposes other than defence and the maintenance of peace in accordance with the decisions of the international community.

As we move towards the complete and comprehensive elimination of nuclear weapons we will seek to build down the nuclear forces to a minimum level which would guarantee that war does not break out. Furthermore, the would-be aggressor must be discouraged from launching a first disarming strike.

Russia supports the complete elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction subject to effective verification.

Russia stands for effective measures to be taken to consolidate the non-proliferation regime of nuclear and other mass destruction weapons and their delivery systems.

We are committed to ensuring as much as possible mutual transparency, predictability and confidence-building measures in the military field, including military doctrines, defence budgets, plans for armed forces structure and activity, and international trade in arms.

(Mr. Krasulin, Russian Federation)

Russia is open to cooperation in developing additional measures designed to prevent war as a result of an accident, miscalculation or terrorism and will work to rule out military incidents.

Russia will promote and participate in establishing collective security structures on the basis of the United Nations Charter.

The long-term arms control objectives mentioned above prompt the need for the early adoption of a set of viable measures - both in interaction with our partners and on a unilateral basis - in all of the key areas of arms limitation and reduction process. Russia's concrete proposals to that effect were set forth by its President and Foreign Minister in their statements.

Those are the guidelines of Russia's arms control and disarmament policy. Russia is open to ideas and proposals of other States with a view to strengthening international peace and security. Our joint efforts can and must secure a lasting peace.

Let me now outline very briefly the main tasks to be addressed by the Commission and its four Working Groups, as we see them.

We consider it a top priority for the Commission to consolidate and build on the progress which has been possible owing to a leaner agenda and a focus on the most relevant issues of a clearly multilateral nature, issues which must be dealt with in a multilateral setting.

We believe that the international community must continue to accord a high priority to nuclear disarmament issues. Our basic position on that score was set out earlier.

This is not the first time that nuclear disarmament issues are being addressed by the Commission. And yet it is to be regretted that no headway in this area has so far been discernible. This deplorable situation may be due

(Mr. Krasulin, Russian Federation)

to our desire to tackle the whole cluster of nuclear issues all at once. That said, we may be well advised to come up with recommendations on individual aspects of this highly complex problem, above all, with regard to the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, the nuclear test ban, the safety of non-nuclear States, the establishment of nuclear-free zones and so forth.

(Mr. Krasulin, Russian Federation)

Regional measures are an integral part of the entire process of disarmament. Regional arms control is a direct road leading towards the prevention of conflicts and the removal of the material preconditions for their escalation to the level of an armed conflict.

We assume that there is a need for a multicomponent approach towards regional arms control, including such topics as non-proliferation of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction, missile and missile technology non-proliferation, international arms transfers, confidence-building and transparency in the military sphere, including on the high seas, as well as other aspects of nuclear and conventional arms control.

It can be very helpful to draw upon the positive experience in various regions, above all in Europe, where progress in implementing regional disarmament measures has been the greatest. Nevertheless, regional measures should be undertaken with the specific situation in every region being taken into account and with the participation of all States concerned. These measures should be aimed at achieving the lowest possible level of armaments in accordance with the principle of non-prejudice to the security of any participant in this process.

We see the role of the United Nations as that of being a catalyst for such processes. It is precisely the reason why the Commission, in our view, could work out recommendations of a general nature regarding regional arms control measures related to different regions - some kind of regional models.

In view of the ever-increasing importance of science and technology in the context of disarmament and international security we deem it useful to seek a more prominent place in the United Nations agenda for these issues in order to contribute towards making the best of the positive opportunities

(Mr. Krasulin, Russian Federation)

presented by the progress of science and technology in the areas of arms control and disarmament, by improvement of the existing methods and procedures of verification, as well as by destruction and disposal of weapons, and so forth.

At the same time, Russia is in favour of ensuring that scientific achievements do not have negative consequences that could seriously destabilize the international situation and undermine the emerging atmosphere of confidence among States. In this connection, we are prepared to be active in helping the efforts of United Nations member countries aimed at preventing a qualitative arms race and expanding access by all countries to scientific and technical achievements.

The issues related to objective information on military questions are becoming a major additional factor of stability and military security as a whole.

We favour an enhanced role and possibilities for the United Nsations in expanding the area of application of openness and transparency principles in military issues. These principles should become a standard feature of inter-State relations and cover all areas of national military activities.

Russia lends its support to the Guidelines on Arms Transfers adopted in London in October 1991 and is prepared, as of the beginning of next year, to supply data for inclusion in the Register that is being established under the United Nations General Assembly resolution on transparency in the area of armaments adopted at its forty-sixth session.

We also reaffirm our intention to provide, on an annual basis, information for inclusion into the current United Nations system of standardized information on military expenditures.

(Mr. Krasulin, Russian Federation)

In our opinion, the Working Group on objective information on military matters can, by all accounts, successfully complete its work at the current session by adopting appropriate recommendations.

Russia regards the Disarmament Commission as a major disarmament mechanism of the United Nations that contributes greatly towards resolving arms control issues. We intend to continue to be active in the common efforts aimed at making the work of the Commission more streamlined while advocating continued informal consultations with a view to finding even more efficient methods for this body's activities.

In conclusion, may I express the hope that the businesslike atmosphere of the current session and its intention to work constructively will provide an efficient basis for achieving further progress and specific results in seeking solutions for the difficult and important tasks now facing the Commission.

Mr. FLOREAN (Romania) (interpretation from French): I should like first to congratulate you sincerely, Sir, on behalf of the Romanian delegation on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. I should also like to address our best wishes to the other members of the Bureau as well as to the members of the Secretariat. I wish also to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Hohenfellner of Austria, for the competent and successful way in which he guided the work of our Commission in 1991. The Romanian delegation, which this year has the responsibility of the vice-chairmanship, assures you of its complete cooperation.

This year, the Disarmament Commission is meeting in special circumstances. The end of the cold war and rapid fundamental changes in international relations have already set in motion at the United Nations the beginning of a process of profound development. Suffice it to consider the

(Mr. Florean, Romania)

debates and the decisions taken by the General Assembly at the forty-sixth session, especially the admission of several new Member States, as well as the Security Council summit meeting. The revitalization of this world Organization and its increased role in the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security are more than ever before enjoying general support among Member States. Dialogue and cooperation are the best response to security problems, whether at the world or the regional levels.

With regard to Europe, the Paris Charter, adopted at the summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in November 1990, setting out the bases for a new democratic consensus on the continent, provides not only for the strengthening of standards but also for the machinery to achieve regional goals, including, or especially, in the fields of confidence-building and security, arms control and disarmament and crisis management. The way in which the CSCE has been considering the question of security shows that this concept has multiple dimensions and is not at all limited to military aspects.

Recently the new democracies of Eastern Europe have attached priority to the question of the possible replacement of the former security - or, more precisely, the insecurity, the lack of security - in that part of Europe. Even before the former Soviet Union became the Commonwealth of Independent States, the East European countries had expressed their desire to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and/or the Western European Union in order to gain protection. Furthermore, their legitimate interests were not ignored by those in the Euro-Atlantic security structures, who tried to offer new possibilities for dialogue and consultation.

(Mr. Florean, Romania)

While engaged in fundamentally changing its relationship with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, NATO has also made possible diplomatic ties leading to the establishment of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. In its turn, the Western European Union is becoming more and more sensitive to the security needs of our region. I hardly need recall that only this approach - which has already been translated into institutional terms by NATO - can banish all speculation that there may be a certain selectivity in the cooperation between the Western European Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. By so doing, the above institutions have sent an unambiguous message, which is that in terms of security matters the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are of equal importance.

However, there are also some points of concern. For example, we are seeing trends for associations of States to acquire security and military functions, although they were originally set up for economic reasons, and we can even observe that there is some interest in modernizing weapons and armies, sometimes with foreign assistance. Persistent movement in that direction within the general European context, now that the Paris Treaty on arms limitation has been signed, is likely to provoke questions and even suspicion, and is also likely to affect European stability adversely. For our part, we take the view that one of the important premises for a valid response to the problems Euro-Atlantic security now faces might turn out to be the establishment, throughout the Eastern European zone, of a realistic spirit of interested solidarity.

(Mr. Florean, Romania)

The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) is called upon to play a new and ever more important role in the building of a new Europe. Romania, keeping faith with the principles which underpin the strength and the viability of the first CSCE, is resolved to contribute to the achievement of a new CSCE capable of meeting the challenges of the post-cold-war period and of establishing a new stage in cooperation and security for all, within the framework of the Euro-Atlantic community.

What we have in mind is the establishment in Europe of a post-Helsinki-II forum as a significant step towards ensuring, as part of an overall approach, that there is resolute concentration on security issues. The forum must include additional efforts in this area, such as arms control and disarmament, confidence- and security-building measures, implementation and verification of the existing treaties, conversion of military complexes, and the establishment of flexible forms of cooperation with the European and Euro-Atlantic structures. To our mind, the CSCE forum for security through cooperation must seek balanced solutions which would benefit security for Europe in general, for all of its regions and for each of its participating States.

The overall international context offers us new opportunities for openness and dialogue in the area of arms control and disarmament. In turn, the multilateral disarmament bodies must contribute more towards the new world security order. At the last General Assembly session, the debates in the First Committee clearly demonstrated the growing interdependence between the various aspects of that security, whether in terms of the struggle against proliferation or in terms of technology transfers, verification of disarmament, confidence-building and transparency measures, or of the political settlement of conflicts at the regional or global level.

(Mr. Florean, Romania)

Recent experience also shows that progress can be achieved and broad consensus reached in the multilateral framework. Examples of this kind can be found in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, on the draft convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons, the establishment, at the United Nations, of the international Register of Conventional Arms transfers, and, in general, all those efforts aimed at ensuring the non-proliferation of armaments in all their forms. On the other hand, however, as many speakers said during the last General Assembly session, we cannot ignore the gap, which appears to be widening, between the functioning of the multilateral disarmament bodies and the rapid rate of change in world events impacting directly on international security.

The Disarmament Commission, with its renewed agenda and its streamlined procedure, could be considered one of the most up-to-date bodies. However, things are not going to happen by themselves. Under these favourable conditions, we must make maximum use of the material possibilities available to us, especially working time. As many delegations emphasized at the end of the last substantive session, and during the discussion of the report of the Disarmament Commission in the General Assembly, the results of the 1991 session, the first after the adoption of the new procedure, could have been substantially more significant.

We have to believe that the Commission's agenda, its substantive work, must reflect, in a manner which is at once realistic and dynamic, the needs, options and trends which have come to light, primarily in the debates of the General Assembly, as follows: firstly, in terms of the actual choice of the areas of priority interest which have a real chance of being studied in depth and of leading to results in the Commission; and, secondly, in that the

(Mr. Florean, Romania)

substantive work of the Commission will have to make maximum use of the three sessions available for the consideration of each item in order to achieve tangible results, that is, to achieve consensus recommendations of significance for debates, negotiations and especially future action in the area of arms control and disarmament.

This year, the final consideration and the conclusion of the agenda item "Objective information on military matters" will offer the first proof and yardstick against which to measure the actual extent of the Commission's renewed effectiveness. We think that the summary document that you, Mr. Chairman, drafted last year in your capacity as Chairman of Working Group I, is a good foundation for the final work at this session and for the preparation of a substantive concluding document. As we see it, the pre-session consultations at the very least enabled us to note that the document from the Chairman of Working Group I at last year's session is generally accepted as a basis for the work this year.

We are sure that under the chairmanship of Ambassador Hyltenius, whose competence and qualities as a negotiator are very well known, Working Group I will be able to draft substantive, specific recommendations which will reflect the importance of military openness as a necessary element for international security, arms control and disarmament and confidence-building, and will at the same time give the United Nations an active role in the matter. My delegation will do its best to ensure that these steps succeed. The interest and constant commitment of my country in this area were once again illustrated at the last General Assembly session, where, together with the German delegation, our delegation initiated resolution 46/25, entitled "Transparency of military expenditures".

(Mr. Florean, Romania)

With regard to agenda item 5, on the process of nuclear disarmament, last year's work showed how complex the problem is as much as it brought out the differences in approach and in positions. We think that the preliminary consultations held by Ambassador Prakash Shah painted a similar picture. In our view, in approaching a subject of such complexity within the framework of the Commission, where consensus is the rule, we must make realistic choices as to which aspects and elements offer fertile ground for constructive consideration leading to results.

(Mr. Florean, Romania)

Dialogue in this area should be encouraged by such developments and positive steps very recently registered as, for example, the supplementary initiatives aimed at reducing nuclear weapons announced by Washington and Moscow; the ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty by China; the ratification by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of the safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency; and France's decision to suspend nuclear testing. In this sense, the working document presented by Australia could still be a realistic and positive reference point for our work.

For Working Group III on regional disarmament, the informal list of topics prepared by the Chairman of the Group, as well as the various opinions expressed in that regard, offer a good basis for making progress at this session in the preparation of specific texts on the basis of the broad areas of understanding concerning numerous questions of principle that emerged during the work in 1991. We shall have to make up quickly the gap between the extent of the agreement in principle on various subjects and the stage of texts actually drawn up.

The broad debate on security, arms control and regional disarmament questions that took place in the First Committee during the last session of the General Assembly, as well as the resolutions adopted in this regard, also provide an important element of reference and updating. Two priority areas for our work that had already emerged last year are, on the one hand, the overall developments in the situation regarding regional disarmament and its impact on world security, and, on the other, the elaboration of criteria and principles that could be applied according to the specific situation in any given region or country.

(Mr. Florean, Romania)

Agenda item 7, "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields", was taken up in detail at the 1991 session for the first time. Many working documents submitted last year, and the debates that gave us a picture of the possible areas of agreement and interest, provide a broad working basis for this session.

In conclusion, allow me to join my delegation's voice to those who have drawn attention to the fact that our agenda is full and that the time available to us is limited. But we have ambitions and hopes to get us moving.

This year, the Commission must finalize and adopt the recommendations containing the principles and specific guidelines for agenda item 4, "Objective information on military matters". On the three other substantive items, the Commission in the course of its work at its 1992 session should lay down the basis for consensus recommendations to be finalized and adopted at its next session. Generally speaking, we should always keep in mind that the results of the work of the Disarmament Commission, the specific substantive recommendations that it adopts, should be commensurate with the scope of their timeliness and with the impact they may have on the debates, negotiations and, above all, actions of States and international bodies in the area of arms control and disarmament.

Mr. HOU Zhitong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): First of all, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, please allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the current session of the Disarmament Commission. I am confident that, with your rich diplomatic

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

experience and skill, you will successfully steer this session to positive progress. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau upon their election. I should like to welcome those delegations which are participating in the Commission's work for the first time. I wish to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the Chinese delegation is ready to cooperate constructively with you, the Bureau, the other delegations, and Mr. Davinic of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Hohenfellner of Austria, for his contributions during the last session.

Since the last session of our Commission, the world has witnessed many major events, among which the disintegration of the Soviet Union is of the most far-reaching significance. This marks the end of the bipolar structure and the beginning of a transitional period towards a multipolar world structure. The old balance of power in the world has been deflected and the re-division and re-alignment of forces in the world have started.

Confronting these major changes in the world situation, members of the international community have all shown concern and formed different opinions. In our view, though the situation marked by military confrontation between the super-Powers has come to an end, the world is by no means tranquil. While old factors causing tension have yet to be completely eliminated, new factors of instability are increasing. Many political contradictions and economic frictions, as well as ethnic, religious and territorial disputes that were long hidden under the old bipolar structure, have come to the fore, creating new crises, turbulence or even wars. The world economic situation is also grim, with a widening gap between the North and the South and a deteriorating economic environment for many developing countries. Events have shown that peace and development, the two major issues that have confronted the world for

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

many years, have both remained unsolved. In current international relations, hegemonism and power politics constitute part of the grave reality we continue to face today.

In these circumstances, the people of the world are more anxious to establish a new international political and economic order conducive to the realization of peace and development. It is therefore important to have a correct understanding of world reality today.

Our world is a diversified one. Today, the membership of the United Nations has reached 175, and each and every country has experienced a different social and historical development and formed various social systems, values, ways of life, religious beliefs and cultural traditions. Based on this reality, only when all countries respect each other, seek common ground while putting aside differences, treat each other as equals and live in harmony can lasting peace be maintained and the necessary conditions created for common development of all countries.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

We believe that in this multi-polar world all countries, large or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are equal sovereign members of the internatisnal community entitled to participate in the settlement of international affairs. Such practices as the big bullying the small, the strong lording it over the weak and the rich oppressing the poor should be effectively rejected. No country should be allowed to invade or annex other countries' territories with any excuse. People of all countries have the right to choose independently their own social, political and economic systems and path of development and formulate their policies and laws in the light of their own national conditions. No country should interfere in the internal affairs of other countries or impose its own values, ideology or mode of development on other countries under any pretext.

At the present stage of human development people have come to understand more and more clearly that the world we are living in is an interdependent one. Countries should adopt an open attitude, learn from and complement each other and enhance cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. On some of the regional security matters and major world issues the necessary consultations, coordination and cooperation should be carried out. In our view, all the above-mentioned principles should become basic norms for the establishment of a new international order.

The current session is convened exactly against the background of the aforementioned new situation and requirements. In the deliberation of the four items on our agenda we should bear in mind this new background. All the four agenda items are major issues concerning international peace and security today. At the last session the Chinese delegation was deeply impressed by the spirit of constructive cooperation and the desire for consensus shown by the

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

various parties. In order to facilitate our deliberations at this session, I would like to state further the Chinese Government's principled position and stand on the agenda items in front of us. We are willing to join the discussions constructively with a view to achieving positive and concrete results at this session.

In our view, the importance of the item "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons" is self-evident. Arms control and disarmament, including nuclear-arms control and disarmament, are important parts in the efforts to achieve international peace and security. The realization of effective nuclear disarmament will contribute to the relaxation of international tension and the alleviation of some new contradictions and confrontations, thus promoting international peace and security.

In recent years the long-standing stagnation in international nuclear disarmament has been somewhat improved and some initial results have been achieved in the endeavour for nuclear disarmament. The United States and the former Soviet Union made some headway in their bilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. After lengthy negotiations they finally concluded a treaty on the total destruction of all their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles and an agreement on the reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons. The two sides also declared respectively their plans for the partial reduction of their tactical nuclear weapons and for nuclear confidence-building measures. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the United States and the Russian Federation have put forward successively a number of proposals on further reductions of strategic nuclear weapons. All these are welcome developments.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

However, such progress is preliminary and limited, and there is still a long way to go in the process of nuclear disarmament. The agreement on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons is yet to be ratified and implemented, and other plans and proposals have yet to be negotiated and to materialize. It is the hope of the international community that relevant countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States will continue to cooperate effectively with each other in order to ensure the safety of nuclear weapons and prevent nuclear proliferation. It is obvious that, even after the countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals have cut their nuclear arsenals in accordance with their agreements and announcements, they will still possess the largest number of nuclear weapons in the world, weapons which continue to be a serious threat to international security and are still more than enough to destroy the whole of mankind several times over.

Meanwhile those countries are still developing space weapons by applying the most sophisticated scientific and technological achievements, and are considering jointly building a so-called global defence system against nuclear weapons. This will inevitably extend the current arms race to outer space, thereby adding a new threat to world peace. It also needs to be pointed out that their arms talks have so far focused mainly on the question of quantity, and the qualitative improvement of their nuclear armaments has not come to a halt. Therefore, they still have a special responsibility in nuclear disarmament.

The acceleration of the nuclear disarmament process should make the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons its final objective. In order to realize this lofty goal, countries with the largest nuclear arsenals should assume their special responsibility to take the lead

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

in halting the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and drastically cut all types of nuclear weapons deployed at home and abroad, thus creating conditions for convening a broadly representative international conference on nuclear disarmament, with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States.

Pending the realization of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, as an effective measure for the prevention of nuclear war, all nuclear-weapon States should, in our view, undertake the following commitments:

First, not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances and conclude an international agreement on not being the first to use nuclear weapons;

Secondly, not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones and conclude an international legal instrument on not using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones;

Thirdly, to support the proposals for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, respect their status and undertake the corresponding obligations.

The item "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields" is a forward-looking one. It is of realistic and far-reaching significance for the Disarmament Commission to select this item for deliberation. The basic starting-point of the deliberation on this item should be how to ensure that science and technology will be used to benefit mankind, foster economic and social development of all countries and maintain international peace and security. Therefore, we should, on the one hand, conduct wide-ranging and

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

in-depth discussions on how to prevent the use of modern science and technology in a qualitative arms race and work out practical guiding principles in this respect. In our view, the cessation of the qualitative arms race, the realization of nuclear and conventional disarmament and the prohibition of chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction as well as space weapons constitute the fundamental way to prevent science and technology from being used for destructive purposes and to enhance international security.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

On the other hand, in order to encourage and promote scientific and technological development for civilian purposes in all countries and international cooperation in this regard, we are in favour of formulating a set of practical standards of technical assessment and guiding principles for the new sciences and technologies that have potential military uses. While we impose necessary, appropriate and reasonable control on the transfer of high technologies that can be used for military purposes, efforts should be made to prevent any hindrance of national development of science and technology for civilian purposes and international cooperation in science and technology, under the pretext of restricting or controlling the military application of science and technology. We hold that in those two fields countries possessing the largest arsenals and developed countries with a strong capability in military science and technology should shoulder a special responsibility.

China attaches importance to the issue of regional disarmament, and always holds that bilateral, regional and multilateral disarmament efforts are mutually complementary. The initiation of, and the participation by countries in a given region in, appropriate regional disarmament efforts, as permitted and required by their specific regional conditions, will help ease regional tension, enhance regional peace, stability, cooperation and development and have a positive bearing on peace and security and disarmament endeavours in other regions and the world as a whole.

In order to obtain a broad consensus by the international community, China has organized in cooperation with disarmament organs within the United Nations, and will continue to organize, multilateral seminars and symposiums in which officials and scholars from various countries participate. For instance, in March this year we, together with the United Nations Institute

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

for Disarmament Research, held a seminar on the security of the Asia-Pacific region. In August this year we shall host in Shanghai a United Nations symposium on the question of security and disarmament in the Asia-Pacific region. We believe that the successful convening of these meetings will promote an in-depth consideration and deliberation of the problem of regional disarmament and security and lead to a solution.

We think that at last year's session the Disarmament Commission did some very useful work on this item. The Chairman's paper summarized the main concerns of different parties, and its content, on the whole, is fairly balanced. It can serve as the basis of this year's consideration. In its working paper on regional disarmament submitted at the last session, the Chinese delegation comprehensively stated the Chinese Government's position on this issue. I wish to reiterate here that progress in regional disarmament depends first on the specific circumstances and conditions of the region involved. But extraregional States, and especially countries with the largest arsenals, should also cooperate with and support such endeavours.

Respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and the five principles of peaceful coexistence - in particular, the principle of the non-use of force in international relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes - is the prerequisite for successful regional disarmament. All regional disarmament measures should be based on fair, reasonable, comprehensive and balanced principles and should be initiated by the countries in the region concerned, on a voluntary basis and in line with the specific regional conditions, so that the security of these countries will be undiminished and the security of other regions and countries will be unaffected. We are ready to discuss and seek feasible ways for regional disarmament under the guidance of these principles.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

The item "Objective information on military matters" has been under deliberation for two years. The Chinese delegation maintains that the appropriate exchange of objective military information between countries in the light of their own specific conditions will be conducive to the increase of necessary openness and transparency, the deepening of mutual understanding and the relaxation of tension, thus contributing to disarmament and peace and security. Of course, such exchanges should and could only be appropriate and carried out on the basis of voluntary consultations and undiminished security and in the light of each country's specific environment and its political, military and security conditions. As military strength and policy vary from country to country, their impact on the security of other countries and regions also differs. Therefore, there should be differences in terms of order of precedence and degree of obligation in practising openness and transparency.

It needs to be emphasized that respect for the purposes of the Charter and for universally accepted norms guiding international relations is the fundamental premise and primary principle on which any exchange of objective military information and increase of openness and transparency must be based. In this area, no measure will work if this principle is not observed. We have noted that this principle was reflected in the section of principles in the suggested text of the Chairman at the last session. This is highly necessary. The Chinese delegation hopes that our work will be carried out on the basis of this text and that this session, as required by the Disarmament Commission's reform efforts, will finish the consideration of this item successfully and on schedule.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

The task facing the Commission at its current session is an arduous one, and the results of our consideration will have a direct bearing on the Disarmament Commission's role. The Chinese delegation will, as always, participate actively in the discussions. We are prepared to work with all other delegations and make our own contribution to the success of the current session.

Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia): I should like at the outset, Sir, to join previous speakers in extending to you my delegation's congratulations on your election as Chairman of the Commission. We are confident that under your able guidance and with your diplomatic skill our deliberations will achieve concrete results. Our felicitations also go to the other members of the Bureau. Let me also avail myself of this opportunity to commend the outgoing Chairman, Ambassador Hohenfellner, for the progress achieved during last year's session of the Commission.

As may be recalled, during the Commission's substantive session held in 1991 my delegation clearly set forth its position on the agenda items now before us. It is therefore hardly necessary to reiterate Indonesia's views, which I hope will be considered along with those expressed by other members in reaching consensus proposals and recommendations for the General Assembly.

During this session, however, we would like to comment briefly on some aspects of the agenda items. First, with regard to item 3, the validity and relevance of providing objective information on military matters bears reaffirmation in dispelling a major cause of mistrust and suspicion and in removing impediments to the painfully slow progress in disarmament efforts. It is now widely acknowledged that the sharing of military data on a regular basis, along with agreed criteria for their definition and comparison,

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

could make significant contributions to promoting more open policies in military matters and thereby create an atmosphere conducive to progress in disarmament.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

In this context, Indonesia has endorsed the widely held view that the United Nations should formulate and establish international standards to give shape and content to the emerging trends of openness and transparency in military matters. The Organization should become the repository of objective data for the sharing and exchange of information by institutionalizing the collection, compilation and publication of data on military matters. Existing institutions could also be called upon to make contributions in their areas of responsibility. Such an information system could include the compilation of data on armed forces and armaments, military production, military research and development, arms transfers and foreign military aid.

Important progress was made in Working Group I at last year's session of the Commission, as reflected in the Chairman's suggested text on guidelines for objective information on military matters. My delegation believes that it is incumbent upon all members of the Commission to make further efforts to ensure the completion of the deliberations on this item at this session as scheduled.

As regards agenda item 5, it is important to keep in mind the interests and perspectives of non-aligned countries, whose fundamental objective during the past three decades has always been the achievement of nuclear disarmament. We have noted some encouraging developments in this regard, particularly the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) Treaty of last year and the unilateral declarations made by some nuclear Powers further to reduce nuclear armaments, developments which have bolstered our hopes for substantive progress towards nuclear disarmament. The international community therefore rightly expects the prompt ratification of the START agreement as well as follow-up actions to give substance and content to these unilateral declarations.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

Yet, as noted by the Ministerial Meeting of Non-Aligned Countries held last September in Accra, Ghana, a disturbing preference is shown to seek agreements such as that on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF), the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forced in Europe (CFE) and START. While these endeavours are to be welcomed, they call for sustained efforts under multilateral auspices to eliminate the threat posed to the entire world by existing arsenals and to address comprehensively the entire range of disarmament issues, including such priority concerns as a comprehensive test ban and the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, in both its vertical and horizontal aspects. While certain measures of a transitional nature are indeed necessary, we find in the proposals long advanced by the non-aligned countries specific courses of action which warrant serious consideration. My delegation is convinced that it is only through the adoption and implementation of these proposals that we can go to the heart of the problems posed by the nuclear menace in all its ramifications.

We therefore find regrettable the lack of substantive progress during last year's session of Working Group II. Under these circumstances, it is essential that the Commission reaffirm the centrality of the questions relating to nuclear disarmament and actively facilitate the ongoing, mutually complementary bilateral and multilateral negotiations.

As regards agenda item 6, it has been self-evident that its inclusion has aroused considerable interest among Member States, since security and disarmament are often region-specific and are best addressed within a regional context. Hence regional approaches to these overriding concerns based on geopolitical, historical, cultural and other factors have become not only pertinent but also timely. It was gratifying to note that in Working

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

Group III, which I had the privilege to chair, important progress was made, as reflected in the Chairman's paper. A convergence of views emerged on a number of elements among the topics under consideration. The quality of the deliberations was enhanced by the sincere endeavours to explore possible areas of common ground. While these have clarified a number of issues of vital interest to many States, I believe that the advances already made could serve as a basis for further in-depth discussion at the current session so as to identify further common ground on various aspects of regional approaches to security and disarmament.

As regards item 7, the initial phase of discussions in Working Group IV has stimulated our thinking and approaches to the role of science and technology, especially in the context of further sophistication and modernization of both nuclear and conventional armaments. They affect us all in various ways, and their reality has set a fast pace for both positive change and negative impact. The Commission's task is to bear in mind both these aspects and their impact on international security and disarmament so as to identify those that offer heightened prospects for reversing the arms race while gaining a clearer perspective on developments that complicate efforts to negotiate lower levels of armaments. My delegation is aware of the difficulties inherent in dealing with such a complex and wide-ranging mandate, but remains hopeful that at this session the Group will engage in an in-depth discussion to narrow differing viewpoints.

Finally, in the newly emerging international situation characterized by an end to cold-war and bloc division, prospects for arms limitation and reductions have become brighter than at any time in the past. We have in particular witnessed the transition from an era of mere regulation of

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

armaments and the arms race to the beginnings of the destruction of existing arsenals. In this, the Disarmament Commission has a valuable role to play in providing an impetus to negotiations through the formulation of proposals and recommendations. In the context of the reforms carried out in its functioning and of a clearly focused agenda, the utility of the Commission in proposing and elaborating various measures for negotiations is beyond dispute. For this to be realized, it is essential that all members, especially the major Powers, accord recognition to the unique role of the Commission as an essential component of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. Much has been said about the objective need to strengthen rather than weaken the multilateral approach in resolving global issues. Nowhere is this more self-evident than in the field of disarmament. And in this respect the United Nations remains the indispensable forum without which efforts to promote security and disarmament at both the regional and global levels would prove futile.

Mr. REDZUAN (Malaysia): Let me begin, Sir, by joining previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the 1992 session of the Disarmament Commission. My delegation is confident that under your able and experienced leadership the 1992 session of the Commission will come to a successful conclusion.

This is the second session since we decided on streamlining the work of the Commission by organizing the scope of our work under four topics to ensure that we have a systematic and focused approach, while enhancing the overall function of the Disarmament Commission. Last year's session also successfully produced general guidelines on the substantive aspects of the topics under discussion. It will be up to us to build on the gains of last year's session and further strengthen the work of the Commission.

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

The dramatic and fast moving changes in the international situation resulting from the end of the Cold War and the East-West rivalry have presented the international community with a lot of opportunities as well as challenges. One positive trend is the increasingly strong consensus in favour of enhancing the centrality of the United Nations role in the maintenance of international peace and security. This is evident in the statements made by a number of world leaders at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly and the Security Council meeting on 31 January 1992, as well as the increasing involvement and enhanced United Nations role in peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts in various parts of the world.

At the same time, substantial progress has been made in nuclear disarmament through unilateral, bilateral and regional measures. The most important has been the agreement on the START Treaty and far-reaching unilateral decisions concerning further reductions in the level of nuclear armaments by the United States, the former Soviet Union and the Russian Federation. The Malaysian Government is also pleased to note that China has ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and that France will soon be a party to the Treaty. We also welcome the announcement by France of a moratorium on further underground testing during 1992. The joint denuclearization declaration by the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is also a positive development.

All these developments have indeed been encouraging. Yet more needs to be done in advancing the interests of the international community in achieving our disarmament objectives. First and foremost, the United Nations must be actively engaged and involved in every aspect of the disarmament process, even if certain important initiatives and progress are first made at the unilateral, bilateral and regional levels. But this can be attained only if

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

the disarmament process within the United Nations system is allowed to benefit from the dramatic changes in attitudes and policies that have led to some of the recent important advances, such as the conclusion of the START Treaty and the unilateral decisions by the United States and Russia.

Similarly, the strong international consensus in support of the centrality of the United Nations role in the maintenance of international peace and security should also prevail in the disarmament process within the United Nations system. Old cold-war thinking and behaviour, which have obstructed the consideration of substantive disarmament issues within the United Nations system, must now give way to a positive approach if we truly want to see a concrete and effective United Nations role in disarmament. Hence it is our hope that the commitment made at the Security Council summit meeting on 31 January 1992 on concrete steps to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in disarmament will be reflected in the present and future work of various United Nations bodies dealing with disarmament, including the Disarmament Commission.

The vast majority of United Nations members yearn for a greater and more effective United Nations role in addressing disarmament issues now that the cold war and East-West rivalry are over. There is so much talk and so much hope expressed about the potentials of a peace dividend. A recent United Nations study, for instance, pointed out that if there is an annual reduction of 3 per cent in defence spending for the rest of this decade it will yield by the year 2000 a total peace dividend of $1.2 trillion to $1.5 trillion in the industrial countries and $279 billion in the developing countries. Such a peace dividend could well be used to overcome the current shortage in international developmental funds and address the longstanding issues of freedom from hunger, illiteracy and homelessness in the developing countries,

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

which must, together with the question of international peace and security and sustainable development, be at the top of the agenda for the future.

My delegation is fully committed to encouraging efforts that would contribute to the strengthening of the work of the United Nations system concerning objective information on military matters and enhancing transparency, that being a central element in confidence- and security-building measures. In this context, the Malaysian delegation, along with a number of other delegations associated with the Non-Aligned Movement, participated actively in the negotiations in the First Committee last year that brought about overwhelming support for resolution 46/36 L, "Transparency in armaments".

We are pleased that a group of countries associated with the Non-Aligned Movement, including Malaysia, was able to negotiate with the European Community and Japan and agree on a resolution that would not be limited to having a United Nations Register on sales and transfers of conventional arms which would otherwise have been lopsided in favour of the producing countries, but would in time develop into a more comprehensive process, opening up the possibility of incorporating other important elements, such as arms production and stockpiles, as well as the transfer of technology and non-conventional weapons.

Despite some important advances in the area of disarmament, there are also critical challenges before us, especially the danger of arms proliferation, particularly of nuclear weapons, requiring the strengthening of the safeguards system within the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The decision of the Security Council summit meeting on 31 January 1992 to take concrete steps to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in the areas of disarmament, including nuclear proliferation, is timely. However, the Security Council and the IAEA should not be selective in their approach both with regard to recipient and supplier countries. One obvious gap, for

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

instance, is the inability of the IAEA fully to inspect nuclear facilities in Israel. Malaysia believes strongly that a just and non-selective approach is required to ensure integrity and confidence in the ability of the United Nations to put an effective end to nuclear proliferation. In the light of IAEA recent experience, there is also an urgent need for the nuclear nations and others with dual-purpose high-level technology to have stricter export control mechanisms, which should be worked out within the existing United Nations system on disarmament.

The concern of the international community over the status of nuclear arms in the former Soviet republics is valid, and it is our hope that the matter will be resolved through bilateral discussions and in the context of START and other agreements involving the former Soviet Union and the new Russian Federation.

The prevention of the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons is another important challenge to the international community today. Malaysia hopes that serious efforts will be made to ensure the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament so that an agreement will be signed before the end of 1992. At the same time, Malaysia also supports efforts to strengthen the verification system of the biological weapons Convention.

As mentioned earlier, Malaysia fully supports the concept of exchanging objective information on military matters and transparency as a necessary precursor to confidence-building and security. The Chairman of Working Group I last year produced a working paper containing useful contributions from a number of delegations, which we believe could be used as a basis for our work this year. We welcome some positive proposals to make military holdings and relative strengths of countries more transparent. However, we

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

believe that those suggestions and proposals could still be improved by including greater details on weapons systems within the proposed framework. Since this is the third year that the subject has been on the Commission's agenda, there is clearly a need to work doubly hard to ensure that we can achieve a consensus and submit appropriate recommendations to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

On Working Group II, many previous speakers have expressed the hope that the end of the cold war will enable us to focus more on the question of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. My delegation shares this hope. While we welcome the significant progress made by the nuclear States in nuclear disarmament, the most important task before the Commission is to agree on a meaningful role for the United Nations in nuclear disarmament and to define measures to address the threat of nuclear proliferation. In this connection, our session this year should concentrate on the specifics of the sub-items identified by the Chairman of last year's Working Group II. We will have to establish together the relationship between nuclear disarmament, peace and security, the logical steps in the process of nuclear disarmament and ways to strengthen the role of the United Nations in that process.

Malaysia believes that regional disarmament is a crucial element in contributing towards global peace and security. This makes the work of Working Group III important. To assist us in our work, my delegation supports the idea that Working Group III should focus the discussions on the relationship of regional disarmament and global security, arms limitation and disarmament, as well as principles and guidelines.

The importance of regional disarmament has been highlighted by the recent Gulf war as well as the ongoing tension and instability in and between nations of the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

While there is an international consensus on the importance of regional disarmament, it is recognized that there is no single formula on how to advance the process. Different regions of the world have their own peculiar problems. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) is probably the most comprehensive and successful regional process of recent years, one which advances amongst others the objective of achieving regional disarmament. The lessons learned from the CSCE process may provide some useful pointers and is a source of encouragement to other regions.

Malaysia and the other members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), in our desire to achieve peace and economic progress in the region, have since 1971 advocated the concept of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality as well as a nuclear-free zone in South-East Asia. It continues to be Malaysia's strong conviction that those zones, within which the question of regional disarmament could also be addressed, provide the best framework for long-term peace and stability in the region. The Paris Peace Agreement on Cambodia, involving the largest United Nations participation in peace making and peace building, and the recent decision by Vietnam and Laos to adhere to the 1976 Bali Treaty of Amity and Cooperation are positive developments that can advance the cause of peace and regional cooperation in South-East Asia.

The role of science and technology in disarmament, which will be dealt with by Working Group IV, is an increasingly important subject. The task before us is to examine the potentials of new advances in science and technology for the benefit of disarmament and to allow for the application and use of advanced scientific and technological means and instruments to strengthen the centrality of the United Nations role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

(Mr. Redzuan, Malaysia)

With the end of the cold war, and during this critical period of global transition, there is an urgent need to address the question of converting military capabilities and resources to civilian use not only in the former Warsaw Pact countries but also within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other military Powers. This is an area where science and technology not only could be used in promoting disarmament but would assist in restructuring the economies of countries which are heavily dependent on their military-industrial complexes, so that they all could contribute towards changing the international system from one dominated by military confrontation and power struggle to one of peaceful economic competition and cooperation, beneficial to mankind.

I have earlier mentioned the importance of non-proliferation in the disarmament process. This is rightly a subject which must be dealt with as a priority agenda item within the United Nations disarmament process. The Disarmament Commission should have an important role to play in examining the problem and addressing the question of strengthening the mechanism to deal with non-proliferation within the United Nations system. In this regard, my delegation would like to see on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission a separate new item on non-proliferation. It could be along the lines suggested by the head of the delegation of Sweden in his statement yesterday.

In conclusion, Sir, my delegation would like to offer its assurance that it will cooperate fully to ensure the success of the work of the 1992 session under your chairmanship.

Ms. MASON (Canada): Let me begin by echoing the congratulations that so many speakers have appropriately extended to you, Mr. Chairman, as well as to the new Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Petrovsky.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

I should like also to express my delegation's profound appreciation to Ambassador Hohenfellner.

In my closing statement to the 1991 session of the Disarmament Commission (A/CN.10/PV.161) I began as follows:

As head of the Canadian delegation to the first session of the Disarmament Commission under the reformed procedure, and against the backdrop of unprecedented and extraordinary cooperation by our colleagues in other United Nations forums, I came to the 1991 session in a cautiously optimistic mood. The issues before us were timely and in urgent need of our focused attention.

As the discussion proceeded in three of the four Working Groups, I became less cautious and more optimistic. A real dialogue began to take place, with a multiplicity of views enriching individual delegations' assessments of the various issues before us. I regret to say, however, that this new spirit was not in evidence in Working Group II on nuclear issues, despite the guidance of a distinguished and dedicated Chairman. Rather, the deliberations there again showed the divergence of views characteristic of past meetings of the Disarmament Commission. This year's - that is, the 1991 - deliberations were essentially limited to a general debate of the entire spectrum of issues related to nuclear disarmament. Efforts were made by some delegations to focus on areas where it was thought that consensus might be possible but, in the end, this approach did not prove acceptable to all delegations. In Canada's view, if this Working Group is to make progress in 1992 on the vital issues of nuclear disarmament, a more constructive approach must be adopted.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

However, in the other three Working Groups, while delegations did not abandon long-standing positions on which there continue to be serious and important differences of view, constructive discussion and debate ensued, which revealed a far greater degree of common ground than I had hitherto imagined existed. In the view of my delegation, a firm foundation for further work, without prejudice to areas of disagreement, clearly began to emerge.

However, when it came to translating what Canada saw as the real progress that was in fact made during these Working Group discussions into reports which could consolidate this progress and serve as the basis for our work in 1992, then my earlier optimism proved to be naïve indeed.

In other words, when it came to beginning the process of fulfilling the mandate of the Disarmament Commission, as reflected in the consensus resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session:

"to make every effort to achieve specific recommendations on the items on its agenda" (resolution 45/62 B, para. 9)

- or, to quote my Brazilian colleague here today, to conduct in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues, leading to the adoption of concrete recommendations on these issues - delegations instead took an entirely different position from that characterizing the very constructive elaboration of issues that had taken place, and some began to argue that, since we had three years to consider three of the four items and one more year for the fourth item, why should we attempt to agree to anything substantive in 1991? The implication seemed to be that because it was premature to seek to identify recommendations for action in 1991, it was also premature to seek to do anything substantive, as if the recommendations were growing on a tree somewhere and needed only to be plucked off when the time came, with no thought for fertilizing the ground or taking any other concrete action to

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

ensure that there would be a worthwhile product at the end of the three-year period. Over and over again delegations put the question as to why we should try to go beyond a mere cataloguing of views.

I then offered Canada's view as to why we thought more was required of us. I recalled that in the past, when every aspect of the United Nations was frozen in the prism of the cold-war confrontation, to have a constructive discussion of issues was a worthwhile goal in and of itself, and indeed we would say that mere discussion continues to be a worthwhile activity. But now that action is possible, discussion, however constructive, is simply not good enough, not when the problems we face are so daunting and so urgent and not when our colleagues in the Security Council, in the Committee on peace-keeping, in the specialized agencies dealing with humanitarian needs, have already moved well beyond talking and are acting together in the most sensitive and delicate and difficult of areas.

Since I spoke those words in my closing statement in May 1991, we have seen a myriad of further changes to the international security environment - too many to list in their entirety. In any event, some 10 speakers before me have already canvassed many of them at suitable length. Suffice it for me to list two of the most significant from the perspective of the Disarmament Commission. The first is the election of a new Secretary-General of the United Nations, whose vigorous pursuit of reform of the United Nations system has already led to the disappearance of the Department of Disarmament Affairs, per se. The second is the historic summit of the Security Council, where non-proliferation and regional issues were identified as priority items on the international security agenda of the 1990s.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

Perhaps the best symbol of the profound effect on the United Nations system of the changed international security environment is the transformation in responsibilities of Under-Secretary-General Akashi. He has gone from overseeing the operations of the Department of Disarmament Affairs to managing the transition of Cambodia from war to peace and from unelected to elected government. In short, he has gone from a role largely concerned with nurturing the theory of disarmament to its nuts-and-bolts implementation.

Turning once again to my closing statement of the 1991 session (A/CN.10/PV.161), I said that Canada believes the Disarmament Commission is at a historic crossroads. One path points backwards towards continued inaction and irrelevancy. The other points forward. It is not, I believe, a grand and dramatic road. It is simply one where each delegation uses its best efforts to focus on specific items which offer the most hope of concrete progress in the here and now. All of us know too well where the areas of divergence lie. At the same time, it is Canada's firm view that, with good will and determination, we the representatives to the 1992 session of the Disarmament Commission can identify areas not only of divergence but of agreement. These areas, if pursued steadily, will in turn demonstrate to the increasing list of doubters that the Disarmament Commission is relevant to the new world of challenge and opportunity before us all.

The challenges that face us in the waning years of the twentieth century are beyond the capacity of any one country or group of countries to solve alone. The new path of shared responsibility beckons to us all. Let us go down it together.

Mr. NYAKYI (United Republic of Tanzania): Let me first take this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Your

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

able leadership of Working Group I during last year's session gives us confidence that you will provide the leadership required to steer this year's session to a successful conclusion. My delegation pledges its full cooperation with you and the other members of the Bureau in our common endeavour to achieve concrete results on the issues on the agenda of this year's session of the Disarmament Commission.

The United Nations Charter has accorded the highest priority to the maintenance of international peace and security. The importance of the mandate of the Disarmament Commission cannot, therefore, be overemphasized. Hence, as a prerequisite for the attainment of international peace and security, general and complete disarmament must be placed at the forefront of the endeavours of the United Nations. The four substantive agenda items before us summarize the most pressing concerns of our time in the disarmament field.

In my delegation's view, nuclear disarmament remains foremost among these concerns. For, despite the encouraging progress made in recent years towards the reduction of nuclear weapons, the danger posed by existing stockpiles remains real and serious. As my delegation observed during the debate in the First Committee at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, experts had pointed out after the signing of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) that the levels of strategic weapons which the United States and the Soviet Union had agreed to retain in their arsenals were the same as they had been when those countries began negotiating nine years before and about five times the number when the Non-Proliferation Treaty was signed in 1968. If account is taken of the stocks possessed by other nuclear-weapon States, which no less seriously threaten the survival of humanity, the significance of the

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

nuclear threat becomes more immediate. We must therefore urge all the nuclear-weapon States to accord the highest priority to the issue of nuclear disarmament.

In the wake of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, fears have been rightly expressed that nuclear weapons, as well as manpower and the technology for their manufacture, could find their way into the wrong hands. My delegation agrees that every effort must be made to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in this way.

Unfortunately, it is not just non-nuclear-weapon States which have been seeking to profit from the situation. There have been some disturbing reports of some nuclear-weapon States searching in the Commonwealth of Independent States for technology and manpower to improve their own nuclear-weapon capability. Countries doing this are clearly in violation of their obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We hope that in carrying out its mandate under the Treaty the International Atomic Energy Agency will not overlook any form of violation.

Since our last session, a number of countries, including my own, Tanzania, have acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. This is a very welcome development that brings the Treaty regime ever closer to the goal of universality. But, despite our accession, we still regard the Treaty as seriously flawed. It remains an unequal treaty between the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States. As we have already seen, nuclear disarmament measures taken so far have barely made a dent in existing stockpiles. And so long as vertical proliferation continues there will be no improvement in the present situation. Rather, the situation is certain to worsen.

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

A comprehensive test-ban treaty remains the only measure that could check the nuclear arms race, sustain non-proliferation and guarantee the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. That is why my delegation will continue to accord the highest priority to the efforts to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We regret that the Partial Test-Ban Treaty Amendment Conference has still not been enabled to move forward. We welcome the moratorium on testing announced by the former Soviet Union last year - and now honoured by the Russian Federation - and the more recent one announced by France, and hope that the other nuclear-weapon States will soon follow with their own.

The establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones are the two most important initiatives for promoting regional disarmament. For Africa the 1964 Declaration by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on the denuclearization of the continent, and the establishment of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace remain the two most important objectives in this connection. After years of frustration there now appears to be some hope of movement on the first front. South Africa's accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty holds out the promise of making possible the attainment of the goal of the denuclearization of Africa. We commend the United Nations and the OAU for the steps they have taken so far towards the conclusion of a convention on the denuclearization of Africa. We still have to see whether South Africa will live up to the letter and spirit of its obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the safeguards agreements it concludes with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

Unfortunately, after more than 20 years of sustained effort to establish a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, the countries of the region are nowhere near this goal. Various problems, including principally the non-cooperation of the major Powers in the efforts to convene the International Conference on the Indian Ocean, still bedevil the initiative. We appeal to all concerned to overcome their difficulties so as to enable the Conference to convene in 1993 as decided by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

According priority to nuclear disarmament does not imply any disregard for the urgent need to work for conventional disarmament. Conventional disarmament is part and parcel of general and complete disarmament, which alone can ensure a world free from the scourge of war. Tanzania has therefore always lent its support to all efforts intended to further this goal. Our support for the ongoing efforts to establish a United Nations register of arms transfers is intended to advance this goal. Unfortunately, the register's limited scope is a very serious handicap. As many delegations, including my own, pointed out during the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, its omission of the manufacture, stockpiling and transfer of non-conventional weapons is a serious flaw in the arrangements. Such seriously incomplete information cannot serve the cause of world peace. We therefore trust that all concerned will lend their support to future efforts to rectify this anomaly.

I should like to conclude my brief remarks with a word on agenda item 7 - the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields. This important item has been included in our agenda out of the realization of the crucial role which science and technology can play in the promotion of disarmament and therefore in the

(Mr. Nyakyi, United Republic of Tanzania)

furtherance of international peace and security. The role of science and technology in the field of verification of compliance with disarmament agreements is the most obvious. Less obvious, but no less important, is its potential in the area of the conversion of military industries to civilian industries. The ending of the cold war and of East-West tension has made possible the release of science and technology from destructive to constructive purposes. The emphasis currently being placed on conversion in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has overlooked the urgent need for its application in the West as well. With no enemy to threaten its freedom and security, the West can now afford to devote its considerable scientific and technological knowledge to the cause of the economic and social development of humankind. A prerequisite for this is, of course, the existence of the necessary political will to move from defence-oriented to civilian-oriented industries. As the respected New York Times columnist Leslie Gelb showed in his weekly column last Sunday, this is perhaps the most difficult obstacle to overcome.

My final word is to congratulate Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky on his appointment to the high office of Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and to assure him and his colleagues in the Department of the continued support and cooperation of the Tanzanian delegation.

Mr. ELARABY (Egypt): It gives me personal satisfaction to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Your recognized diplomatic skills and your past experience ensure the success of our deliberations. I should also like on this occasion to express our gratitude to Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner for his very competent guidance of our

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

deliberations last year, and also to convey to all delegations to the Disarmament Commission our sincere appreciation for the election of Egypt as Vice-Chairman of this session. We are committed to cooperating fully, under your competent guidance, Sir, with the Bureau and members of the Commission.

I welcome the appointment of Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Petrovsky and of Mr. P. Davinic to his new post. In this context, I pay a sincere tribute to Mr. Akashi for his many and varied contributions to the cause of disarmament.

Over the years, Egypt has been engaged actively in negotiations and deliberations related to disarmament issues within the various disarmament forums of the United Nations, with the objective of contributing to the achievement of the goals of general and complete disarmament.

Turning to our agenda for this session, my delegation notes that our deliberations last year resulted in progress of varying degrees in relation to our four agenda items. This fact in itself once more clearly draws attention to the divergence of views and priorities held by delegations in their efforts to address their security concerns. I should therefore like to avail myself of this opportunity to emphasize the necessity for our work to be guided by the spirit of dialogue, cooperation, compromise and accommodation if this forum is to continue to make a worthy contribution to the disarmament process.

On the first substantive item, "Objective information on military matters", I must first of all commend you, Mr. Chairman, for your exhaustive efforts at last year's session to produce the Chairman's paper annexed to the report of Working Group I. It certainly provides us with a helpful working tool for focusing our deliberations on this item during its final year of consideration.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

It has become increasingly apparent that greater emphasis is being accorded in the various forums of the United Nations to the concept of military transparency and the means of achieving it. Nevertheless, there remains a wide divergence of views on the viability of this concept to date as an effective means to advance the objectives of disarmament. The views on this subject have encompassed the entire span of the question at hand: from considering it a vital tool of, and necessary prerequisite to, disarmament to questioning the usefulness of transparency in military matters in advancing disarmament measures. Scepticism continues, especially concerning the practicability of trying to formulate measures, in the context of transparency, that may be applicable on a global basis, irrespective of the specific characteristics of different regions and of the political realities that exist and the legitimate security concerns of the States in each particular region.

For its part, Egypt welcomes the efforts under way to advance transparency in military matters as an important confidence-building measure that may have a positive effect on promoting substantive disarmament measures, may enhance mutual trust and may bring about a relaxation of tensions associated with the high level of accumulation of armaments of all types. At the same time, we must reiterate our firm belief that any and all proposed mechanisms, such as the register, to advance the concept of transparency must rest on principles of non-discrimination and universality and must take into account the agreed priorities of disarmament. All these matters have been addressed at length by my delegation during meetings of the General Assembly.

It is necessary also that we do not lose sight of the fact that if transparency is to bear fruit the political will of States must be directed

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

towards the achievement of the goals of disarmament. It is our hope that through our deliberations during this session, and with the cooperation of all delegations, we may be able to narrow the gaps that still exist on this issue and arrive at commonly acceptable definitions and formulations concerning objective information on military matters.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

As for the second item of our agenda, "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the object of the elimination of nuclear weapons", as most delegations are aware, the deliberations on this item last year, which Egypt had the honour to chair, were useful in defining the four elements that are to guide the consideration of the subject-matter during this session. They were also instrumental in drawing attention to a number of specific topics that delegations indicated their interest in pursuing further in an effort to reach a common understanding. Despite the extent of the divergence of views on this item, in terms both of substance and of perceptions, we remain convinced that if our mutual political will is directed towards resolving long-standing obstacles much can be achieved, as has certainly been shown in the field of nuclear disarmament.

Egypt is convinced that nuclear disarmament must firmly remain the highest priority on the international disarmament agenda. We shall pursue as a first priority the ultimate goal of the elimination of the nuclear threat which still hangs over international peace and security.

Egypt continues to support actively the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the cornerstone of disarmament efforts aimed at the elimination of nuclear weapons and the preservation of international peace and security. We are heartened by the ever-growing international commitment to this important legal instrument. Coupled with the strengthening of the safeguards mechanism of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the non-proliferation regime will acquire new vigour in contributing to the preservation of international peace and security. At the same time, we are still disturbed by the fact that the Treaty still lacks universal adherence, thereby detracting from its ability to bring about the

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

total elimination of the nuclear threat, and also by the fact that it has had little effect on the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. These facts confirm the legitimate right of non-nuclear-weapon States to call for explicit and credible security assurances from the Security Council through the process of updating its resolution 255 (1968).

Though the recent positive developments in international relations have paved the way for significant reductions in the existing stockpiles of nuclear-weapons arsenals - a trend that we encourage and sincerely hope will continue - we must again on this occasion call on the nuclear-weapon States to intensify their efforts to negotiate effectively further far-reaching measures of nuclear disarmament, whether bilaterally or multilaterally, to bring about a definitive end to the nuclear-arms race. At the forefront of such efforts must be the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Turning to the item "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security", Egypt supports vigorously all concrete efforts and initiatives aimed at advancing regional disarmament, whether in the field of conventional or non-conventional weapons, as a vital element of security and international peace and stability. We consider it important to reiterate on this occasion that global and regional approaches to disarmament complement each other and should be pursued simultaneously since they represent different approaches directed towards achieving the same, common goal. Hence, in both spheres due attention must be accorded to the same set of priorities agreed upon by the international community. Regional disarmament is a vital element that can effectively reduce tensions and mistrust between States of a particular region. It is a confidence-building measure of tremendous importance.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

For regional disarmament to contribute effectively to regional peace and stability, we have always emphasized the importance of ensuring that any regional disarmament measures are formulated in accordance with the political realities of each region. Such measures must faithfully take into account the characteristics of each particular region. Specific modalities must be elaborated in each case so as to meet and reflect accurately the security concerns of the States in each region in a just and equitable manner.

Egypt believes that all regional disarmament proposals must ensure, inter alia, the following basic elements: first, increased security for the States of the region while lower quantities of armaments are maintained; secondly, a qualitative and quantitative balance between the military capabilities of all the States of the region; thirdly, the conclusion of agreements on arms reduction and disarmament which may be applied to all States and be complemented by effective monitoring measures securing equal rights and responsibilities for those States; and, fourthly, the accordance of priority to ensuring the absence of weapons of mass destruction - namely, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons - togather with consideration of measures for conventional arms reduction when political circumstances permit.

Egypt has been faithful to those principles and has proposed many regional disarmament measures. In the course of the Cairo 1964 African summit the denuclearization of Africa was proposed - and, ever since, it has been an item on our agenda. In 1974 Egypt sponsored together with Iran a proposal on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East - a proposal that was adopted by consensus in 1980. In April 990 - a few months before the Gulf War - Egypt called for the creation of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. In advancing these proposals

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

we have had the objective of safeguarding Africa and the Middle East from the ominous consequences associated with the introduction in our volatile area of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

At last year's session, many delegations shared their sense of frustration at the lack of progress in addressing the substantive elements of this issue. It is our hope that during this session we can overcome many obstacles that have hindered our work during the past few years.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

Finally, in addressing the role of science and technology in the context of international security, the final item of our agenda, I would like to touch on two brief elements. For the duration of this century, scientific and technological achievements have been devoted to serving the continual refinement of weapons systems of varying degrees of devastation. This has been a most costly endeavour materially since it has diverted the resources of humanity to fuel the arms race, squandering our common potential to alleviate the chronic economic problems that face a vast number of States. We hope that as we approach the coming millennium there will be a reversal of this trend.

There is an increasing awareness of the positive role that science and technology may play in the field of disarmament, particularly in the field of verification of existing and future disarmament measures. This is certainly a welcome development since it will provide a higher degree of confidence between States. Due attention must be given during our deliberations, however, to the practical means that may ensure parity between States in utilizing these achievements and thereby consolidating the disarmament measures applied. We are also challenged to find the appropriate balance between the non-proliferation of science and technology related to armaments in cases where the application of a knowledge is of a dual nature, both military and non-military. The deliberations on this topic during the last session were characterized by possibly having been the most fruitful ever. Yet, there still remains hard work ahead to navigate safely through the intricate nature of this topic.

The task ahead is long and arduous. We need to harness all our efforts in order to advance the cause of disarmament. We hope that under your guidance and leadership, Sir, we will be able to do so.

Mr. BIVERO (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation is pleased at seeing you, Ambassador Erdos, as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. Your diplomatic skill and ability augur well for the success of our work. We also congratulate all the members of the Bureau on their election.

It is up to the Commission to carry out its delicate work in an international context characterized by two significant trends. One is a trend towards cooperation among States on the basis of recognition of their shared responsibilities for international peace and security. The other reflects a growing uncertainty because of the new risks that have appeared as a result of the processes of profound change affecting the current structure of the international system. Controversies, the peaceful settlement of which is obstructed by political problems that constitute new sources of concern regarding international peace and security, include, inter alia, those that result from the emergence of new international sectors that vie over territory, natural resources and, above all, control of military strength in the States of which they were once a part.

In this new, complex context, the Disarmament Commission must make its contribution to the strengthening of relations of cooperation by providing ideas that can help States to advance much more rapidly than in the past towards the objective of general and complete disarmament. We believe that it is far more urgent for the Commission to continue to cooperate in defining elements on the basis of which States, in full agreement and taking into account their specific characteristics, can guide their disarmament efforts. It is clear that, in this context, advances in the work of the Commission will contribute to reducing threats to the peace and help strengthen international security.

(Mr. Bivero, Venezuela)

The methodological changes that have been made in the work of the Commission enable us to focus our efforts on items identified during the 1990 substantive session, and ratified by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/38 A. On this occasion, the Venezuelan delegation wishes to draw the Commission's attention to the contribution made by Latin America and the Caribbean in connection with disarmament.

First, we would like to highlight the Cartagena Declaration, which was signed by the Heads of State of the Andean countries on 4 December 1991. Through that Declaration, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela have pledged to renounce the possession, production, development, use, testing and transfer of any weapon of mass destruction, including nuclear, bacteriological, toxic and chemical weapons. We have thus stated our countries' will to promote the consolidation of Latin America and the Caribbean as the first inhabited region of our world free of weapons of mass destruction.

Secondly, we would like to draw the Commission's attention to the signing of the Tegucigalpa Protocol, adopted during the tenth summit of the Central American Presidents, who affirmed on that occasion their determination to develop a model of regional security based on "a reasonable balance of forces and on the strengthening of civilian rule".

These advances, as well as the efforts made to achieve peace in Central America - where the Esquipulas process has made a decisive contribution to peace in the Central American region by proposing the objective of national reconciliation and by using for that purpose the channels of democracy - have made it possible to initiate a process of disarmament in the region.

(Mr. Bivero, Venezuela)

Thirdly, we would like to highlight the Foz do Iguaçu Declaration, which contains a broad nuclear safeguards clause signed by Brazil and Argentina and covers all nuclear activities on their territories and activities that take place under their control. Provision is also made for safeguards as far as exports of nuclear material are concerned.

Venezuela has attached great importance to policies relating to objective information on military matters. At the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, Venezuela promoted resolution 46/36 H concerning the international Register of Conventional Arms, because we believe it to be a very important step in confidence building and conflict prevention. Nevertheless, as we stated when this issue was discussed, we are convinced that this is merely a first step, since the Register, in order to be universal and non-discriminatory, must in future include control of arms production, transfers of technology and the stockpiling of conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

In connection with the subject of scientific and technological developments, we recognize the different facets of this issue, as the debates on the issue have shown. We feel that the end of the cold war provides an exceptional opportunity to ensure that scientific and technological advances will facilitate verification in international disarmament agreements. Technology is in fact critical in ensuring progress in this process, but it is also true that the scientific and technological process and the access to and use of new technology should be made available to all nations so as to ensure their economic and social development on that basis. We cannot believe that there is an incompatibility between disarmament and access to modern technology. On the contrary, it is necessary to progress towards defining

(Mr. Bivero, Venezuela)

norms and guidelines for access to and transfer of technology for peaceful purposes.

Lastly, in the context of technology and development, we feel that international security is again beginning to be seen as related to the development of new weapons and new weapons systems, which would lend a new dimension to the arms race and generate new sources of tension and conflict. Since technological advance cannot and should not be limited, it becomes ever more necessary for us to focus on its relationship with disarmament as an integral component of the grave economic and social needs of the world, which are the primary reason for us to contribute to international peace and security through disarmament.

(Mr. Bivero, Venezuela)

The Venezuelan delegation wishes to conclude by congratulating Mr. Petrovsky, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, on his appointment to his post, and to express our continued readiness to cooperate with him in our work.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): We are very pleased to see you, Mr. Chairman, presiding over the Disarmament Commission. We also congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

Before the conclusion of this brief general debate, the Mexican delegation would like to make a few comments on the course that our work seems to be taking. This is the second year of what might be called the "new" Disarmament Commission. The reforms that gave us this new Commission are aimed at increasing its efficiency as a deliberative forum in the field of disarmament. For this purpose, a decision was taken to try out a rather original system that is somewhat similar to the game of musical chairs, in which for three years a piece of music is played. Then the music suddenly stops and a chair disappears, and with it one of the four items on our agenda.

According to that system, this year the item on objective information on military matters will disappear; hence the importance of the task that we have entrusted to Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden. What we are trying to do here is to strengthen the role - a role that will of necessity be central - of the United Nations in the application of confidence-building measures. One step will be the Register of arms transfers once it covers all types of weapons and includes an inventory of all arms produced and stockpiled, including weapons of mass destruction and their launch systems.

Geographical proximity favours the promotion of shared interests and leads to similar perceptions of security. Although in some cases, efforts aimed at disarmament and arms limitation can advance more quickly and

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

effectively in a more limited context, they should not be implemented without our taking global factors into account. Security needs in all regions of the world are similar, except that they are expressed differently according to the specific circumstances of each region. Similarly, regional disarmament efforts are universal in interest because situations in one region can have political and security repercussions the world over. If disarmament at the regional level is to be successful, all States of the region - all States - need strictly to comply with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. The adoption of regional disarmament measures would be facilitated if international measures to strengthen the security of the region were adopted at the same time.

The Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly contains the basic elements and specifies the practical measures to be adopted in order to achieve progress in regional disarmament, as regards both conventional and non-conventional disarmament. In accordance with the provisions of its Charter, it is up to the United Nations to play a central role and to bear primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament.

While disarmament is incumbent on all States, nuclear disarmament is particularly so upon the nuclear-weapon States. The final aim of nuclear disarmament is the complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons. Until that objective is achieved, the States that possess the largest and most advanced nuclear arsenals in the world should take the initiative of suspending testing, production and emplacement of all types of nuclear weapons and of reducing drastically and destroying any types of nuclear weapon that they have placed within and outside of their respective territories. In this context, we are pleased at France's unilateral decision to suspend its testing in 1992. That measure joins the unilateral decision

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

taken by the Russian Federation to suspend provisionally its nuclear testing. The cessation and prohibition of the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons would be an important measure in stemming and reversing the nuclear arms race.

In order to avoid nuclear war, until effective nuclear disarmament measures are adopted all nuclear-weapon States should commit themselves not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or in any circumstance, and to refrain from the use or threat of use of those weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones. The example of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which just a few months ago celebrated its silver anniversary, could perhaps be considered with greater care by this Commission.

Recent progress in the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union, now the Russian Federation - in particular the signing in July 1991 of the START Treaty - as well as the unilateral nuclear disarmament initiatives announced by the two countries in late 1991, represent an encouraging sign that the principle military Powers have become aware that their vast nuclear arsenals constitute a threat not only to international peace and security but also to their own national security. Nevertheless, the dismembering of the Soviet Union contains the risk of a loss of control over important nuclear arsenals. Almost a half-century after the threat of nuclear holocaust first appeared, a great deal remains to be done to eliminate the risk of nuclear war. A first step in that direction would be a renunciation of the policy of nuclear deterrence.

Now that the cold war is over, it is time to begin a dialogue to achieve a genuine nuclear non-proliferation regime. In this context, we must recognize the validity of the argument that the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty imposes asymmetrical responsibilities between nuclear-weapon States and

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

non-nuclear-weapon States. Now that all the nuclear-weapon States have announced their intention to adhere to the non-proliferation Treaty, we should see the beginning of a process of reduction in their nuclear arsenals, with the ultimate aim of their total elimination.

The complete cessation of nuclear testing is one of the principle goals in the sphere of disarmament, and it is the key in curbing the qualitative nuclear arms race. The multilateral negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear-test treaty should be promoted. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has a central role to play in this field.

The fact that the Disarmament Commission is considering the item entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related areas" reveals the international community's awareness of the growing interdependence of these items, as well as a general acceptance of a broadened concept of security. The many working papers submitted during the last session of the Disarmament Commission reflect the growing interest in this item.

Traditionally, questions related to science and technology as elements closely related to efforts to achieve economic and social development have been considered in multilateral forums of an economic nature. Since 1978, however, as is seen in paragraph 39 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, it was said that qualititative and quantitative measures are both important in the disarmament process, and that is why efforts to that end:

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

"must include negotiations on the limitation and cessation of the qualititative improvement of armaments, especially weapons of mass destruction and the development of new means of warfare so that ultimately scientific and technological achievements may be used solely for peaceful purposes". (res. S-10/2, para. 39)

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

The formulation of sub-items for consideration by this Commission in connection with this item of primary importance demonstrates the item's many aspects and the diversity of interests that need to be taken into account in its consideration. In this context, it is no coincidence that various groups of delegations have a greater or lesser degree of interest in one or another of the four sub-items. Nevertheless, it will be necessary to achieve a balance in the consideration of each of them, so that the Disarmament Commission can achieve an integrated set of recommendations. In this, the second year of the item's consideration, the Working Group should tackle the drafting of recommendations that can enable the Commission to reach agreement on the subject during the 1993 session.

Before concluding, it is timely that we should underscore the importance of taking advantage of the present international situation in order to take decisive and irreversible steps in the field of nuclear disarmament with a view to the total elimination of these weapons of mass destruction. Over 30 years ago, the General Assembly identified nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament under effective international control as the two priority goals of the international community in the field of disarmament. Today, encouraging signs have appeared in the field of nuclear disarmament. In our debates here, we should bear all this in mind and avoid, as a result of the game of musical chairs or items, sidestepping those disarmament priorities that we established in the 1960s and reaffirmed in 1978.

In the course of this debate, a number of speakers have emphasized the need for us to focus on those aspects of the disarmament problem that are conducive to consensus. We are all in favour of consensus, but it should be an agreed consensus. Consensus, however, should not be used or invoked in order to hamper the work of the United Nations. Had we applied the rule of

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

consensus in the past, it would not have been possible to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the Non-Proliferation Treaty, nor would there have been concerted action on the part of the United Nations in the Persian Gulf last year, nor would we have the United Nations Charter which, in 1945, as we all know, was put to the vote paragraph by paragraph.

Ms. FIFFE (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): The Cuban delegation wishes you every success, Mr. Chairman, as you guide the work of this session of the Disarmament Commission. We would also like to acknowledge and express thanks for the work that was done by Mr. Hohenfellner, the representative of Austria, who directed the work of this forum at the last session. My delegation also congratulates the Vice-Chairmen and all of the other staff who, one way or another, enable all aspects of the Commission's work to be carried out successfully. We give them all assurances of our support; and, as always, we shall strive for the successful development of the work of this forum.

The Disarmament Commission's mandate is based on the guidelines of paragraph 118 (a) of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which points out this shall be a deliberative body, a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, the function of which shall be to consider and make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament and to follow up the relevant decisions and recommendations of the special session. In order to contribute to fulfilling that mandate, my delegation wishes to refer to those aspects of the four agenda items of this Commission that we consider to be vital.

The existence of immense nuclear arsenals, the enormous accumulation of conventional weapons, and the increase in armed forces and in the ability to perfect all types of weapons qualitatively on the basis of scientific and

(Ms. Fiffe, Cuba)

technological developments pose incalculable risks to international peace and security. The fact that a small group of countries has the privilege of possessing nuclear weapons gives those States the potential, in no way glorious, to exert all types of threats and pressures on other States that do not have those weapons, so as to impose their policies and decisions or to try to bend their will and eliminate any supposed threat to interests that they deem vital.

In Cuba's view, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence in whatever form constitutes a reflection of the cold war and therefore runs counter to the changes that have taken place in the international sphere in recent times. The maintenance of that doctrine does not correspond to certain statements that have been made by some leaders of the main nuclear Powers concerning relations between their respective countries. According to these statements, they have ceased to be enemy Powers and have become friends and allies.

This continuation of nuclear capacity both heightens and reflects tension. It aggravates conflicts in various parts of the world and endangers the securiy of all States, in particular of those States that do not have nuclear weapons. It also increases the risk of nuclear war. For such reasons as these, it is vital that measures and agreements be adopted to ensure the elimination of all nuclear weapons through a step-by-step process under strict international verification, in which, while all States are duty-bound to contribute, it is up to the nuclear-weapon States to shoulder the burden of responsibility.

In the document that we have submitted, there are proposals for concrete action to be carried out. But in general terms, the paper reflects the fact that my country continues to feel that the threat of nuclear weapons is as strong today as during the cold war period. The partial measures adopted to

(Ms. Fiffe, Cuba)

avoid horizontal proliferation, while enjoying our support, do not meet our demands for a priority cessation of the nuclear-arms race, as approved by the international community during the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Final Document of which remains a solid basis for resolving the disarmament problems of our day that remain outstanding.

In connection with the agenda item, "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security", we wish to express our support for the view that global security is inseparable from the process of disarmament in its various aspects and levels. Thus, we share the view expressed by many delegations to the effect that progress in one area can affect the regional context, just as the lack of progress at the global level has a negative impact at the regional level. In this connection, we believe that any negotiation process for disarmament and arms limitation should achieve global security while it takes into account the regional security and international security as a whole.

High priority should be given to the adoption of disarmament and arms limitation measures in those regions that have a heavy concentration of weaponry, conflicts and tension that can lead to confrontation between States in a given region, or between those States and other States that have interests in that region. In order to facilitate the adoption of agreements in this area and to take other measures of a regional or global scope, there must be respect for the right of every State freely to choose the political and security system that best reflects the interests and wishes of its population. In accordance with the Charter, no State can assume the right to take this type of decision on behalf of another State.

(Ms. Fiffe, Cuba)

If agreements are to be successful and realistic, they must be entered into on the basis of a formal commitment on the part of all States to fulfil in good faith the obligations they have undertaken; there must also be participation not only of every State concerned located within the region but also, under given conditions, of those States that, whether they belong to the region in question or not, have military bases, troops or other military installations or presence, so that they can be included in the negotiations. Those weapons that are extremely offensive or destabilizing in nature or that allow for large-scale offensive operations or rapid attacks should be given priority attention.

On this subject, we have also submitted a document that we believe contains a set of ideas and actions that should be taken into account and that we hope will be welcomed as a contribution to reaching an understanding that reflects in a balanced way the legitimate interests of the international community.

My country's active participation in the various international disarmament forums is based on our serious resolve to contribute to achieving an international system of peace and security that contains real and equitable substance for all peoples, based on unrestricted respect for their inalienable rights as embodied in the United Nations Charter. While these objectives are important for all States, they are particularly so for the poor and underdeveloped countries that may find themselves at the mercy of the military Powers. They are even more important for those small countries such as Cuba that are compelled to defend their legitimate rights in the face of the constant hostility and aggressive policy of a super-Power that has a large arsenal of the most deadly and destructive weapons, including nuclear weapons.

(Ms. Fiffe, Cuba)

Indeed, my country is a victim of a systematic effort by the Government of the United States of America to subjugate it and impose extraneous forms of economic, political and social organization upon it in flagrant and devious violation of the norms of international law and of the Charter. This effort includes not only a harsh economic, trade and financial blockade that is being strengthened today. It also includes the illegal, tireless and massive invasion of Cuba's radio space by dozens of radio and television transmissions that every day broadcast hundreds of hours of subversive propaganda, interfere with the normal functioning of national broadcasts, and conduct vicious propaganda campaigns against Cuba by virtue of its control over the international communications media; the periodic conduct of hostile military manoeuvres in the Caribbean close to Cuban territory; and the presence in the Guantanamo naval base - part of our territory that is illegally occupied - maintained against the express will of the people and the Government of Cuba.

In spite of this odd situation imposed upon it by force and foreign threat, Cuba is participating in a conscientious and constructive way in the international disarmament forums, in the certainty that no one can with impunity trample upon the rights that we are defending, and in the hope that eventually the achievements of these forums will benefit all countries equally, whatever region to which they belong, providing them real and comprehensive guarantees of peace and security.

Regarding objective information on military matters, Cuba believes that, although it is not an end in itself, it can help to encourage transparency and openness on all military issues and promote confidence, strengthen mutual respect, reduce tension and promote concrete agreements on disarmament that can ultimately strengthen international peace and security, both regionally and globally. Towards that end, there should be universally accepted criteria

(Ms. Fiffe, Cuba)

to determine possible levels of armed forces and weaponry for States, in order to ensure an appropriate defensive capacity, enabling States to protect their territory. Objective information on military matters should facilitate the adoption by States of military doctrines that are exclusively defensive in nature and structures for their armed forces that are consistent with these doctrines.

In connection with the item on "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related areas", the Commission should, above all, pinpoint the two roles it can play: on the one hand, to contribute to the development and security of the world and, on the other, the development of military facilities and techniques. Achieving the equitable and fair implementation of the former and the total prohibition of the latter should constitute the principal objective of our work, together with guaranteeing the exclusively peaceful use of science and technology for the benefit of the economic development of all States, particularly the developing countries.

Those are the views my delegation wished to express at this point in connection with the four substantive items on the agenda.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: We have heard the last statement for this afternoon - and, for that matter, for the first two days of plenary meetings of the substantive session of the Disarmament Commission for 1992. We have thus concluded the initial stage of our work for 1992.

I think it was worth sitting through these two days, because they have provided the proper chemistry for all of us. We have to acknowledge that, even in the field of disarmament, human relations and personal contacts can

(The Chairman)

make a difference. In the course of this general exchange of views, 35 individual statements were made; in addition, there were two statements made on behalf of two groups of countries; therefore, a total of 50 countries expressed their views and positions on the issues on our agenda.

This is obviously pure mathematics, but I trust that in our diplomatic careers we have all been engaged in exrcises aimed at drafting joint statements or working out common position papers. We should all know, therefore, that such documents can under no circumstances satisfy completely the aspirations of all the parties involved. This is the nature of what we understand by consensus documents, and this is what we have to aim at during the next two weeks at our disposal. I believe that it would be wise to bear this truth in mind throughout the work of this year's Disarmament Commission session. In the respective Working Groups, we have to focus on our substantive mandate, try to accommodate each other's views and come up with an agreed text, a consensus text accepted by everyone but not necessarily meeting all the expectations of each and every delegation.

(The Chairman)

I am saying this as the result of the experience I gained last year as Chairman of the Working Group on objective information on military matters. I trust, however, that we all share the same experience when it comes to working out documents reflecting the positions and views of a host of countries.

We all know that Working Group I must submit its final report by the end of this session whereas the other three Working Groups are called upon to do likewise next year. I am convinced that the views and proposals put forward by so many delegations during these past two days will contribute to achieving the consensus I mentioned earlier. That is why I believe that the general exchange of views was useful and forward-oriented in the sense that we are looking forward to the next two weeks in order to carry out our mandate fully.

Working Group I will meet tomorrow at 10 a.m.; Working Group II, at 11.30 a.m.; Working Group III, at 3 p.m.; and Working Group IV, at 4.30 p.m. In keeping with this programme of work and the weekly timetable, all Working Groups will begin their work tomorrow.

Since the meetings will be held consecutively, at specifically allocated times, I should like to appeal to all delegations to be punctual, for failure to be punctual in one Working Group can actually trigger a ripple effect that will impact upon all the other Working Groups.

The next plenary meeting of the Disarmament Commission will take place on Monday, 27 April to receive the progress reports of the respective subsidiary bodies.

I want to wish every success to all representatives in their efforts to carry out their mandates in the four Working Groups, where the real substantive work is just starting.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.